

**We Compare 7 Super-Big TVs**

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DECEMBER 1985

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*The French Lt.'s Woman*

### *Berger-Braithwaite Videotests*

Sylvania MTS Monitor  
Pioneer Super Beta VCR  
Zenith Hi-Fi VCR  
Akai VHS VCR



**Take away its great picture and you'll still  
be impressed with what you see.**

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*The Magnavox Star System 20" TV. Its great picture is only part of the picture.*



# **THIS IS MAGNAVOX**



# Channel One

## State of Confusion

Forgive us dear reader, especially those of you growling about the above headline. Is it either a cliché (yawn), a joke (perhaps it's to be our 51st state), or a simple act of plagiarism (title of a pretty nifty Kinks' tune)? If you're confused, we understand why. Let us explain.

First, we'd like to quote from a particularly astute interoffice memorandum (memos in these offices are rare; astute memos rarer; quotes from them even rarer). "Here's an item that might make a useful take off point for a Channel One column, particularly as we approach the heavy buying season: the confusion consumers face in making choices among competing brands of video hard and software. There are numerous companies with hundreds (thousands?) of products, only a few of which can be carried by most retailers, with varying features and rubbery prices. What's a consumer to do? How to decide? How to avoid being overwhelmed? Especially a neophyte or casual buyer."

The editor continued, saying, "what tickled me about this clip [a front page story in the *New York Times*] was that some of its key examples deal with video. Are video products becoming synonymous with buyer confusion? Are there ways to make life simpler for consumers? Or is some confusion inevitable...?"

The addressee of said memo was none other than our infamous Young Curmudgeon, who had already read the *Times* piece and was in a considerable state of pique. (Unknown to the memo writer, the YC was late for work, trying to decide which color socks to wear. Well, heck, a sock's a product, isn't it?) The YC is known to love gadgetry—the more bells and whistles the better—and loathe complexity. In practical terms this means products designed with equal doses of yin and yang. It means compromise; alas, the ghost of Henry Clay must have the final say on VCRs. It means if the PV-1720 was good then the PV-1730 must be better by 10 (no offense to Panasonic). Last year, when we ran a story about budget VCRs (under \$500) we charted only 21. We counted 41 in this year's piece even though we defined "budget" under \$400.

In reaction to the confusion conundrum, we offer this issue's special 14-page Yuletide Gift Guide to help you when you're perusing video gear elbow-to-elbow with your fellow consumers. You'll be better equipped to go mano-a-mano with the salesman who has just run out of something you're dying to buy, and is, hence, trying to convince you another brand is "better" even though it costs a little more.

\* \* \*

Confusion takes on another meaning in the arena of morality and taste. We frequently wrestle with the problems they entail, wondering—when we cut questionable copy or decline to cover an especially unappetizing subject—whether we are expressing a sense of moral outrage or simply holding the line against bad taste. Certainly everyone has a right to his own taste, even if it's bad. But when bad taste approaches public disgust, it's another matter. The line, of course, is so thin, we sometimes cross it unknowingly. So we rely on others to remind us, and when that happens, they risk our wrath. We construe that as censorial. Controversy and emotion simmer.

Recently, National Video, a 567-store franchise, let the world know it would not carry a controversial series of tapes known as *The Faces of Death*. These videos show graphic details of the deaths of animals as well as actual human autopsy footage. "We don't believe in censorship," a store official told *Variety*, "and I would never place myself in a position of dictating what somebody else should or should not watch." The tapes, he said, were in "poor taste."

Now perhaps a guy who works in a slaughterhouse, or a forensic physician, would disagree. That's certainly their prerogative. So too is their right to watch the tapes. Perhaps they see more bad taste in a normal day at the office. But National Video's also right. It can sell whatever it wants.

Are we copping out? Not at all. We're just perplexed. So when our editor asks, "Is some confusion inevitable?" The answer is yes. Video is as confusing as life itself. We just try to make it less so every month.

—The Editors

## video

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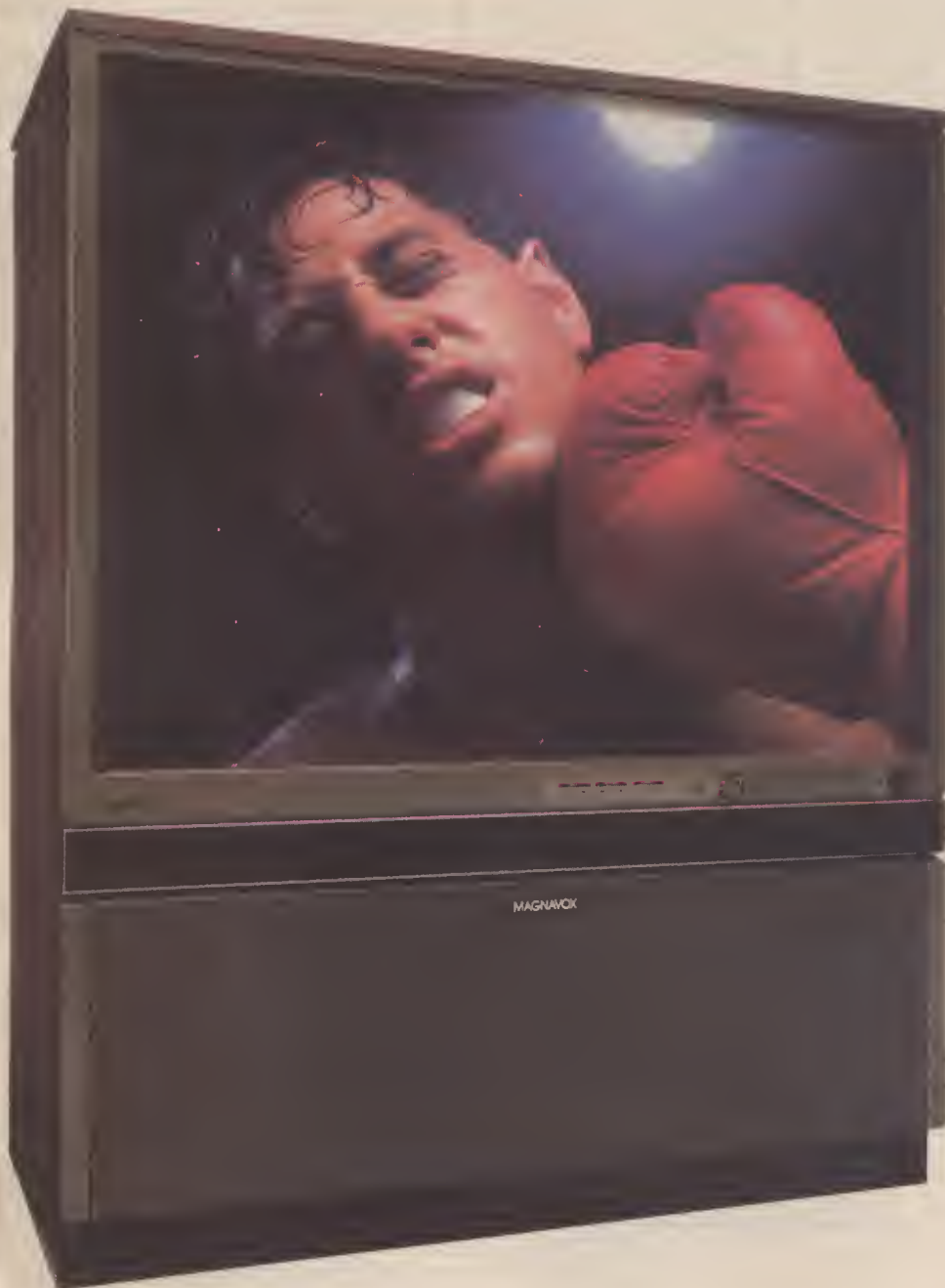
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gives you impact like this.**

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than our previous systems.  
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advanced full comb filter, an  
innovation that produces  
sharper, crisper images.*

*Of course, the impact of our  
picture is only a part of the  
picture. Our new 37" set also  
has a special expanded stereo  
sound system. Its powerful  
integrated circuit creates a  
uniquely full sound that brings  
the picture you're watching  
even more alive.*

*In addition, we've added an  
18-function remote control that  
lets you adjust the sound or  
even switch to VCR or cable  
without leaving your seat. A full  
jack panel that has computer  
monitor capability. And a styl-  
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floor space than a 25" console.*

**The new Magnavox 37" TV. No  
matter how you look at it, it's a  
knockout.**

**THIS IS MAGNAVOX**

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**About the Cover.** Deck the halls with gobbs of gear—our yearly Yuletide Gift Guide's here. In quadruplicate. Cover photo by Vittorio Sartor.

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# Fast Forward

## Late-Breaking News

### **Dawn of The Digital**

While most videophiles are eagerly awaiting the dawn of high-definition digital TV, Toshiba has introduced the first digital VCR. Packed with more memory—1.1 megabits—than the typical personal computer, the VCR is already for sale in Japan for about \$700. Six computer chips give it high-quality freeze and slow motion effects, with some unusual twists. By using the VCR's tuner, viewers can freeze scenes from live broadcasts as well as those on tape. Stay tuned for a U.S. release date.

Digital TV, however, is far from moribund. Expect to see one from Sharp for sale here early next year. The company recently unveiled a 26-inch set able to support nine simultaneous on-screen pictures—enough to watch the whole NFL at once. More than a dozen other TV makers—including Sony, Panasonic and ITT—are producing or planning to produce digital models, some with equally dazzling special effects like zoom and multiple pictures inside pictures.

### **Speech Shuttle**

Director Howard Hawks made his screwball comedies race along by having performers like Cary Grant rattle off dialogue in machine-gun rapid bursts. Ordinary viewers may have the same option soon in a new Sharp VCR that is borrowing an audio trick known as variable speed control.

The technique uses what is known as "sampling technology" to al-

low a tape to be played back with normal-sounding speech at up to twice normal speed. Actors chatter faster and move more quickly—without distortion. At this speed, even the McNeil Lehrer *News Hour* should sound lively.

### **Still Printing**

Closely following our report on electronic still photography ("Video Snap Shots," VIDEO, Nov. 85) comes Kodak's announcement of a \$700 video image printer. Geared for a 1986 debut, the printer will copy individual TV frames from network broadcasts, VCRs, or any device with a video or RGB output, on Kodak instant color film. Just the gadget to capture your favorite relative when she appears as a member of Donahue's audience.

### **Sound Omen**

Here's a note from our Shape-of-Things-to-Come Dept.: 70 percent of all color TVs sold in West Germany have stereo capability though only one stereo program a week is broadcast there.

### **Dishing It Out**

Cable operators should expect some kind of backlash if they succeed in scrambling all or most of their satellite signals. Three-quarters of home dish owners are worried about the prospect, according to a recent survey. More than half would not pay \$395 for a signal decoder or \$12.95 per month to subscribe to encoded programs. About a third said they would pay.

Though it wasn't asked,

count the Department of Justice with the majority. Worried about "possible restraints of trade," the Dept.'s Antitrust Division is investigating plans to scramble signals on an industry-wide basis. The big question is whether a common scrambling plan would discriminate against either dish owners or manufacturers.

### **Invasion USA...**

...By the BBC, that is, and about time, too. Cassettes from its immense trove of video will finally be available here, courtesy of a distribution deal with CBS/Fox Video. Anglophile videophiles will at last be able to rerun favorite episodes of *Fawcett Towers*.

### **\$24.95 or Bust**

Expect to see more pre-recorded videos selling for \$24.95. That's the ideal selling price, according to a survey by 3M. Lower the price any further—say to \$19.95—and stores are not likely to attract enough new buyers to make up the difference.

### **High-Speed Mother**

Speaking of ideal prices, technology is still sweating the details for consumers. New high-speed VHS tape duplicators should soon begin to chip some more off the cost of turning a film into thousands of pre-recorded cassettes. Sony's Sprinter system, which has been in use for Beta tapes for about a year, can copy a two-hour film in 95 seconds. A SuperBeta Sprinter is on the way though an 8mm version is being held up by the lack of a high-enough

quality tape.

As a bonus, the Sprinter also makes it harder to illegally copy its dupes. Instead of the usual one-inch master tape, it records off a medium called a "metal mother mirror master." Sounds heavy.

### **Planet of The Tapes**

Pay-per-view TV took a drubbing when the Nielsen rating people asked 1019 VCR users to compare the cable-delivered service with videocassette rentals. Over 40 percent thought pay-per-view TV a "very poor" value. Only a measly 4 percent called it "very good." VCR owners are only slightly less prejudiced against ordinary pay TV: 66 percent prefer the tapes.

But the real surprise was that 17 percent of the machines in the survey were rented videocassette players, not recorders. When asked if they would buy VCRs instead of VCRs at \$99 a pop, a lot of videophiles checked the Yes box. Industry VIPs tend to look down on lowly VCRs because the price of adding recording capability is relatively small, but there are clearly people out there ready to part with a few Andrew Jacksons for a good no frills player.

### **TV Bookworms**

More of the experts who analyze how people watch TV are concluding that VCR owners are more literate than the average channel-hopper. Syracuse University Professor George Comstock even compared tape viewing to reading: "You select, pay for it and settle down."



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# UNLEASH THE FULL POTENTIAL OF YOUR VCR.

Put a new TDK Extra High Grade video cassette in your VCR and watch the power it unleashes.

Formulated to meet the demands of today's more sophisticated VCRs, TDK E-HG delivers the most impressive performance you've ever seen—even at the more critical slower speeds.

That's because its super-refined Super Avilyn particles enable TDK E-HG to attain a BET value\* of  $35\text{m}^2/\text{g}$ . This provides E-HG with a smoother, denser magnetic surface to record on; which results in super-clear colors, ultra-sharp images and superior audio characteristics. E-HG is also the ideal tape for your prized video library, because it withstands the test of time play after play.

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\*BET value: The measure indicates the fineness of the magnetic particles contained on a tape expressed in units of square acres per pound ( $\text{m}^2/\text{g}$ ). The higher the BET value, the finer and more numerous the particles—and the greater the tape's video and audio performance capability.  
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# Feedback

## Readers Air Their Views

### Unhealthy Glow?

To set the record straight for your readers, we must object to the October cover story ("TV Time Bomb: Ordinary TVs May Pose Serious Health Hazards") written by your managing editor, Stan Pinkwas.

We reject as totally unfounded the substance of this article, the central conclusion of which is that color TV sets emit unsafe levels of radiation. Moreover, we were shocked by the blatant sensationalism of the cover, which features an X-rayed hand under the headline, "TV Radiation Time Bomb—Ticking Away in Your Living Room?"

The notion that color TV receivers emit unsafe levels of radiation is an allegation whose time has passed. The Electronic Industries Association's active involvement in this issue dates back to Congressional hearings in 1966, at which Consumer Electronics Group witnesses outlined the steps our manufacturers had already taken voluntarily to keep such emissions far below that which might have represented a possible hazard.

Congress enacted a law in 1968 strictly limiting X-ray emissions from television receivers. Radiation standards were subsequently issued by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which in 1971 concluded: "Surveys have shown X-ray emissions from properly operated and serviced TV sets manufactured since mid-1968 to be at levels too low to present a public health problem." Similarly, FDA regulates products to ensure that they do not emit unsafe levels of non-ionizing radiation.

Building an unproved alle-

gation against video display terminals (VDTs), the author takes a great leap backward in time, if not in logic, when he revives a controversy that was resolved some 17 years ago! Were it not for the fact that VIDEO Magazine had not yet been founded, your October 1985 issue could easily have been mistaken for one from the Sixties.

To the extent that you have resurrected the non-issue of TV radiation, you have done your readers, and consumers generally, a disservice.

Thomas P. Friel  
Group Vice President  
Consumer Electronics Group  
Electronics Industries Assoc.  
Washington, D.C.

VIDEO's October 1985 issue titled a feature article in these words: "TV Radiation Time Bomb—Ticking Away in Your Living Room?" The headline was illustrated with a skeletal hand placed in front of an eerie green CRT. My reaction to this front cover display was one of alarm and dismay. I was not entirely calmed in reading the article.

While I have no argument that the health and safety of not only the American public, but the world at large is a fitting subject to write about, the headlines and illustration used to create interest in this article are the objects of my concern. The U. S. Government is responsible for administering some of the world's most stringent user protective regulations. If existing safety codes and regulations are not considered adequate, a point not made by the writer, raising fears based on insufficient research data does not serve our industry well. Mr. Pinkwas

could have delivered what he must believe to be a necessary message without resorting to scare tactics.

I shall be interested in hearing if others in our industry share my concern with the way this story was handled.

Roland H. Martin  
Senior Vice President  
Sony Consumer Products Co.  
Park Ridge, N.J.

*The article says that color TV radiation deserves further study because of its similarity to emissions linked to the health problems of computer users and to biological effects observed in the laboratory. We stand by that conclusion: we need to know more about the very low and extremely low frequency radiation TVs emit. The article does not conclude that color TVs emit dangerous levels of radiation. To the contrary, it notes at least three times that today's TVs are safe and should be so considered. The history of TVs and X-rays shows that TV radiation can be controlled. We are confident that VLF and ELF radiation can be similarly curtailed should research prove more conclusive.*

### Whodunnit?

I enjoyed very much Frank Lovece's two-part article "Zworykin v. Farnsworth" (August and September 1985). Having been involved with computers and television since 1967, and having noticed so much garbage written about computers, I had to look into what I paid to learn about television in 1971. Sure enough, I found this in Lesson 1, Question 5 of the National Technical School's Master Course in

Color Television Servicing: "The kinescope ['screen'] of home-television sets was developed by Dr. Zworykin."

Interestingly, it was a multiple-choice question and they didn't even try to confuse the answers with Farnsworth. As you may have guessed, Farnsworth is not mentioned anywhere in the course. The kit that came with the package was of RCA heritage.

Henry L. Preston  
Grapevine, Texas

We of the San Francisco/Northern California Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences have long recognized Philo Taylor Farnsworth as the "Father of Television." We awarded him our prestigious Governor's Award on April 15, 1978. It was accepted by his son on behalf of the many members of his family who were in attendance.

Jack A. Armstrong  
Secretary, N.A.T.A.S.  
San Francisco, Calif.

It would appear that Philo Farnsworth was born around 1906; thus, when he drew a picture on the blackboard at the age of 14, it was 1920. Now, the "modern television" system was first proposed and/or demonstrated by Boris Rosing in 1907. In June 1908, in a letter to the journal *Nature*, A.A. Campbell Swinton described a complete system. In 1911 the same author presented a paper to the Roentgen Society, proposing a TV system using electronic scanning. It is very likely that Farnsworth, who was no doubt a keen reader and interested in electronics, was aware and had seen these publications.



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## Feedback

It is thus very doubtful that Farnsworth was the originator or, for that matter a "boy wonder." P. Boddaert  
Braintree, Mass.

*In Part 1 of "Zworykin v. Farnsworth" (August), Frank Lovece acknowledged both men's debt to "previous serendipitous discoveries." The author recognizes the contributions of both Rosing and Campbell-Swinton, but argues that their failure to follow through on their theories prevents their designation as the "Fathers of Television."*

### The Laser's Edge

In the August 1985 "News and Views," Ken Winslow observes that "At this point, average program prices are about the same for LV as they are for tape." How did Mr. Winslow reach this conclusion? I listed all the programs in the "Directory" of the same issue that were available in both tape and LV formats. On the average, each of these particular LV discs priced \$32.18 below the corresponding tape. Additionally, better discounts are available for disc, and for a good reason: the replication cost of an LV disc is substantially lower than that of a tape.

Anyone who plans to amass more than 6 to 10 movies will be extremely foolish to purchase the cassette version, since the price difference will pay for a low-cost disc player and the savings will be substantial after that. Yes, LV discs are susceptible to scratches, but tapes tend to stretch, print through, partially or totally erase, break, and generally wear out with use in time. Using normal care, LV discs enjoy an infinite life. And, of course, LV has vastly superior audio and video quality. Many hobbyists have chosen LV for just this reason alone.

R.A. Hoffman  
Bedford, Mass.

In Frank Lovece's "Plattertudes" (June 1985) we were given 10 good reasons for purchasing a LaserVision disc player. Spurred by this, I made further inquiries and was surprised to find—even in laser video newsletters—a very large number of complaints regarding defective discs with speckling, instability, crosstalk, skipping, *et cetera*, and complaints about inconvenient procedures for remedying these problems. How come these were not even mentioned in the article? What is the final verdict on LaserVision?

Esteban F. Thomsen  
New York, N.Y.

Is the laser mightier than the sword? My answer is "yes." I owned a Pioneer 700 player for over a year and now have a CLD 900 player. In February I purchased an NEC-N895EU stereo Hi-Fi VCR. Within a month I had to return it for another. The backspace edit and

tracking malfunctioned, and the new one is now in a repair shop. This episode has just about soured me on VCRs. I spent over \$1000 and what have I gotten? I welcome laser's permanent format. It doesn't wear out, jam, get accidentally erased, or have deteriorating drop-outs. I like its fast accessibility to any section of the program being viewed, as well as its picture quality, durability, audio, and interactive computer ability.

Donn Lowe  
New York, N.Y.

### Monster Mash

Many thanks for your fine article on Lugosi, Karloff, and Chaney Jr. ("Trio of Terror," October 1985), who, along with such others as Chaney Sr., Vincent Price, and John Carradine, have frightened us so well in the past and present. I feel compelled, however, to point out that the caption on page 99 mentions Chaney Jr. as the Monster in *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*, when in fact it was Glenn Strange, who also appeared as the Monster in *House of Frankenstein* and *House of Dracula*. Chaney Jr. did reprise his Wolfman role in the *Abbott and Costello* film and, due to a broken ankle by Strange, did don the Frankenstein guise for one scene.

Some side notes—Between 1930 and 1948 Lugosi only portrayed the Dracula character twice, in *Dracula* and *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. Universal had Chaney Jr. and John Carradine play Dracula in other films during that time. Also, Lugosi did eventually play the Frankenstein monster in *Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman*, as did Chaney Jr. in *The Ghost of Frankenstein*, after Karloff decided he had had enough of the "old boy."

Greg Bazaz  
Stoughton, Mass.

### So There

As a lover of video it has always distressed me that videophiles are often stereotyped as passive, unthinking absorbers of electronic stimuli. For this reason I am particularly disturbed by several recent letters attacking VIDEO for a left-wing bias.

Don Hoffman ("Feedback," September) calls for firing a VIDEO writer for what he views as spreading Eastern liberal, anti-American venom. William Tighe ("Feedback," October) enlists George Orwell in an orgy of radical bashing aimed at radical contributors and city-dwellers. What these rantings have in common aside from a small town inferiority complex and ignorance (for example, George Orwell remained a socialist until the day he died) is an inability to accept the plurality of views and interests of consumers of video technology.

One of the strengths of VIDEO is that it can run a fine piece such as Julia Lisella's "Video High" (October). Her article

demonstrates how video technology can be a tool for social change and not just a source of corporate profit or private pleasure-seeking. Let us keep VIDEO true to the spirit of the Bill of Rights and resist the fulminations of the would-be thought police.

Gil Fagiani  
Bronx, N.Y.

### The Answer, My Friend...

It's been almost three months since I finished your "World's Hardest Video Trivia Quiz" (May 1985). I found it very challenging. Until I did your quiz I thought I was good with movie trivia questions—I never realized how much I really missed while watching movies. Since finishing your quiz I watch them differently. (What was Dirty Harry's badge number?) For seven weeks all I did was watch movies. Besides the 100 movies I had to see to answer all the questions, I also watched approximately 30 to 40 more to get the quotes and the "Pro Only" questions.

My favorite questions were 45 (I had no trouble with two of the three movies but almost wore out my pause button to get the last) and 94 (I spent over six hours in the library only to find I was totally on the wrong track). Now that the contest is over, watching movies doesn't seem the same. I wish you could run more—bimonthly would be nice but even an annual contest would be appreciated.

I am eagerly awaiting the results. I think the waiting is harder than getting the answers to 93 and 94.

Bari Allyson Citron  
Southampton, N.Y.

*Ms. Citron's response was echoed by most of the respondents in our Video Trivia contest. For all the answers, as well as the names of the winners, see page 139.*

### Trash and Vaudeville

In reference to the letter from Cynthia D. DiVeto ("Feedback," October 1985): Why can't parents control their children? Why does an adult have to contend with the requirement that all things must be placed on the level of harm to children? Why can't parents see to it that, if there is objectionable material, it be excised before giving it to the child?

Besides that, I found very few articles in VIDEO that would tend to interest a child and I am sure that none of them were written expressly for the child. Also, the number of adult ads was slight and could have been removed. All in all, I am sick of being told that magazines must be censored. William A. Haines  
Brunswick, Md.

The first letter I've ever written to a publication is in response to three letters that appeared in your October Feedback column. Most readers write in to rave about Beta, or a certain technical feature



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STEREO

STATE OF THE ART  
DIGITAL SOUND



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# Where to keep your Christmas memories.

Nothing captures holiday events worth keeping as well as RCA Video Tape. With RCA you get excellence in technology from a proven leader in video. So everything you keep is collector's quality. RCA offers a full line of VHS and Beta tapes . . .



or to tell you they liked (or hated) a particular article. There were three letters, however, from readers who, for some strange reason, feel it is their duty to try and limit what I can watch and read.

Ron Davis doesn't want "young and impressionable" viewers to watch beer commercials. I believe that television would be less entertaining without "Gimme a light—make it a Bud Light" and the very innovative Stroh's commercials, even though I don't happen to drink either of their products. But that isn't the point; once censorship is accepted our freedom is limited.

We have already lost "Marlboro Country" because smoking is bad for us. Will we lose Rice Crispies and Post Toasties commercials because they have too much added sugar? How about McDonald's and Burger King because fast food contains more sodium than we need, and any ads that depict a quiet evening in front of the fire because we don't get enough exercise? I am offended by ads for douches, underwear, panty liners and deodorants but I certainly would not advocate they be barred from the airways. If we look hard enough we can probably find people offended by every product on the market.

Bob Lankford defends cable by attacking "sleazy shows like *Dallas*" and hopes that it will be taken off the air. I like cable very much, and do not watch *Dallas*, but I'd have to be a hermit to be una-

ware of the show's popularity with millions of viewers. Should the millions be limited to what I want to see? I don't think so. Our viewing choices are limited enough already by network censors and the rating wars. If people want to watch "slimy" programs, let them. Mr. Lankford and I can always turn our sets off or rent a video. There's also the other side of the coin—if some people can get *Dallas* off the air, they could also get the shows I do like off, and I wouldn't want that to happen.

Cynthia DiVeto finds she cannot leave VIDEO laying around because of the XXX-rated advertisements. I looked at them pretty carefully and couldn't find a single pornographic picture or four-letter word. They do advertise adult products,

limitations from well-meaning, but misguided, censors. Freedom is far too precious to give away a little piece at a time.

Richard Galik  
Arlington, Va.

I agree 100 percent with Cynthia DiVeto's letter in your October issue. It is truly pathetic when a new hobby and a relatively new publication turns immediately to porn (of one degree or another). The American family is on its way down the tube. XXX-rated this and that—even videos and commercials are going awry. Better the Russians drop the bomb. My subscription will not be renewed, but I dare not give my name and address here. May it never appear in such a trashy publication.

Name and address withheld

## Erratum

A note in our Sony 8mm Camcorder Video-test (August 1985) incorrectly generalized about 8mm resolution and light levels. All 8mm units tested in the issue deliver up to 230 lines of resolution, and the Sony CCD-V8 close to 240 lines. We regret the error.

VIDEO welcomes your comments and questions. Due to the volume of mail received, however, it is not possible to send personal replies; please do not include self-addressed envelopes with letters. All letters published may be edited for clarity and space. Address correspondence to: **Feedback, VIDEO Magazine, 460 West 34th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001.**



but far more graphic material can be found in any "7-11" or other convenience store in magazines for cars, motorcycles, and even in the swimsuit issue of *Sports Illustrated*.

I am all in favor of protecting our children from drugs, alcohol, overt sex and even too much sugar in breakfast food, but censorship is not the way to do it. A good education from loving, caring and well informed parents is far better protection from the evils of life than temporary strait-jacket around a child's mind. Children grow up, and when they do they will encounter beer, lousy television programs, and adult entertainment. As adults, they must be allowed to make their own choices without even further



including super high grade, in a variety of lengths, for pictures that are brighter and clearer than ever.

This holiday, play for keeps with RCA Video Tape.

**RCA** Video Tape

**When you're playing for keeps.**



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# OLIVER!

*The Classic Family  
Musical Is Coming Home*



FEATURING THESE HIT SONGS:

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- I'D DO ANYTHING
- AS LONG AS HE NEEDS ME
- WHO WILL BUY?
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OF  
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# New Products



*Kyocera Finemovie 8*

## Kyocera Brings 8mm Camcorder to U.S.

Kyocera—a Japanese manufacturer of audio products and 35mm still-photo and Super 8 movies cameras—is launching its 8mm video camera/recorder in the U.S. The KDD-200 Finemovie 8 AF camcorder uses a CCD (Charge Coupled Device) image sensor to deliver a whopping 330 lines of horizontal resolution. The infrared auto-focus system can be switched to manual. The one-inch B&W viewfinder is detachable and is equipped with LED warning lights for low light and low battery power. A rechargeable battery pack allows recording for up to two hours.

The camcorder is equipped with a 12-72mm f/1.4 lens with a 6:1 power zoom. The KDD-200 also features one-touch record/review, automatic white balance, back-light compensation, and two sets each of audio/video inputs and outputs.

It weighs 5 lbs., 13 oz with battery pack and cassette.

Kyocera is also offering 8mm blank cassettes for sale in the U.S. The P6 Finemetal tapes use ultra-fine metal particles and are available in 30-, 60-, 90-, and 120-minute lengths (two-hour 8mm tapes are still relatively unusual).

Price: KDD-200, \$1745; P6, \$12.99 to \$17.99 depending on length.

For additional information, circle No. 173 on Reader Service Card.

## Pieces of 8: Sony 8mm Updated

Now that the Sony 8mm products reported on in the August 1985 "New Products" are hitting the stores, here's an update on their availability. The "Mini-8" (CCD-M8U) camcorder and EV-C8U record/playback unit are being sold as the "Pak-8 Handycam" package, along with the LC-V803 carry case, at \$1795. The EV-S700U 8mm home deck



*Sony SuperBetamovie*

is selling for \$1395, less than our estimate of \$1500. The CCD-V8 camcorder, unveiled in VIDEO, July 1985 and showcased in "Darkest Africa's Lightest Camera" in this issue, is now available in an auto-focus version, CCD-V8AFU, for \$1745. All should be currently available.

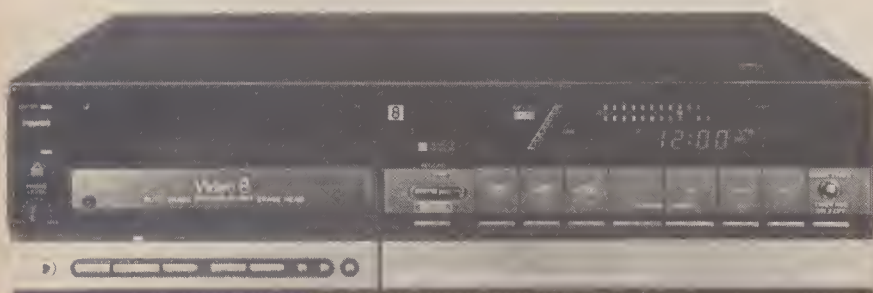
For additional information, circle No. 174 on Reader Service Card.

## SuperBetamovie Sports Increased Resolution

Sony's new SuperBetamovie camcorder boasts a 20 percent increase in resolution. Sony says it has shifted the luminance carrier signal by 800 kHz to achieve the more detailed picture.

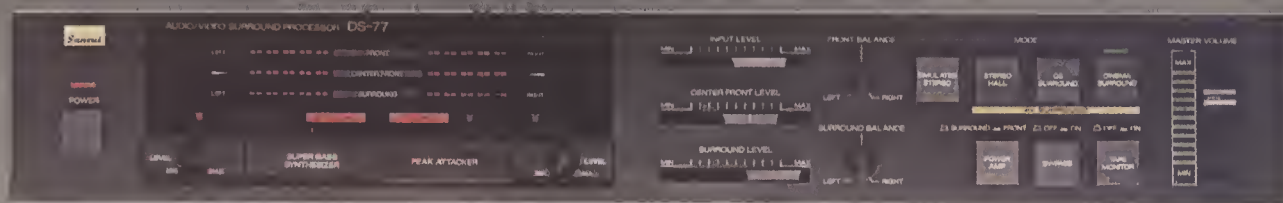
The BMC-660K features an infrared autofocus to prevent parallax images when subject distances change rapidly. A charge-coupled-device (CCD) solid-state image sensor prevents image lag and burn in. Using the CCD sensor also allows a longer battery life because of low power consumption. One nickel-cadmium battery supports 90 minutes of recording. The camcorder requires no warmup time.

The camcorder is equipped with a 6:1 ratio f1.4 power zoom lens and an automatic one-button white-balance control. It can record in light down to 25 lux. The optical viewfinder is reversible for left- or right-eye viewing. The date and time of the shoot can be superimposed on the video and displayed on an LCD





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Hold on to your popcorn! Sansui introduces CinemaSurround: the sensory experience of 360° theatre sound brought right into your home.

With our DS-77 Sound Processor, you'll see, hear and feel the difference as CinemaSurround totally envelops you.

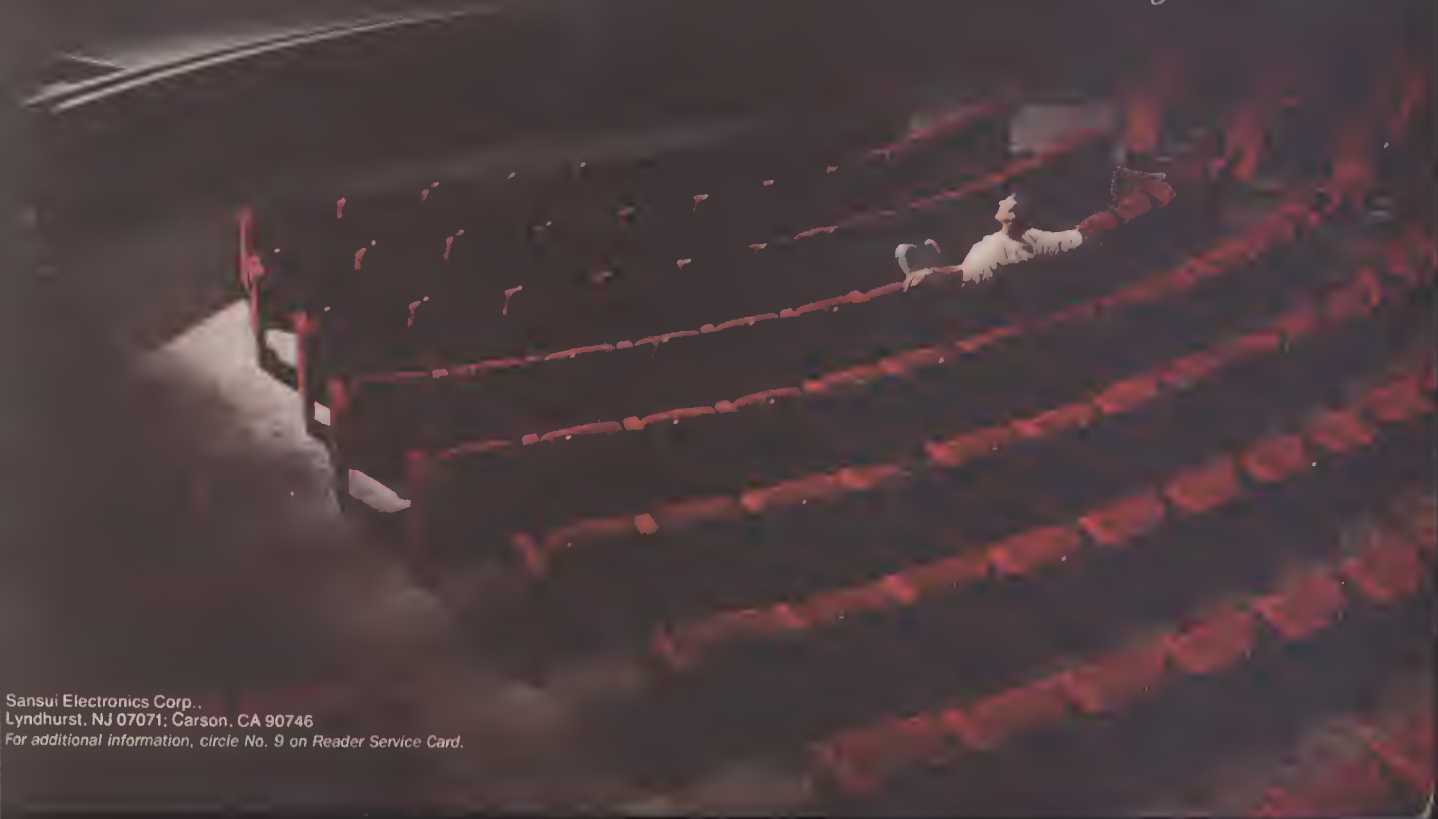
We admit this could cause sensory overload. So try it without the movie. CinemaSurround enhances everything from radio to records. From cassettes to compact discs.

You can also produce CinemaSurround with our SX-V1000 and AV-C10 Control Centers. It's further proof that when it comes to A/V components and systems, nobody's got it together like Sansui.

CinemaSurround. The experience is so incredible, you could sell tickets.



*Putting More Pleasure in Sound.*



## New Products

on the unit's side.

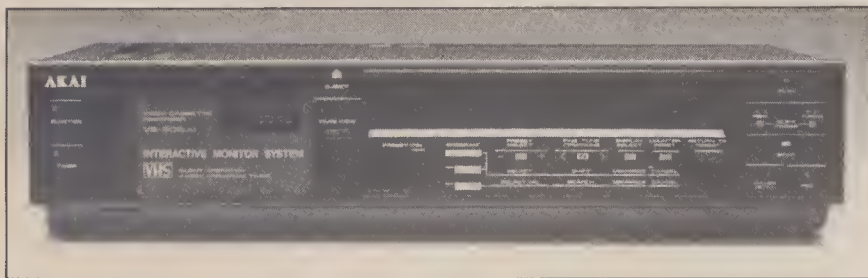
The camcorder weighs 6 lbs., 3 oz. with battery. It has a built-in electret-condenser mono mic. Tapes recorded with the camcorder can be played back on any SuperBeta deck in the B-II mode.

Price: to be announced.

For additional information,  
circle No. 175 on Reader Service Card.

### IMS System Is Akai's Jewel in the Crown

The crown jewel of Akai's two-head VS-303U VHS VCR is the Interactive Monitor System (IMS). Operable using the 32-function wireless remote or via controls on the VCR itself, the IMS provides onscreen display of time of day, day of week, preset station, station search, program selection, tape count in real time or conventional digits, sleep timer, and tracking status.



How's it work? Simply follow the instructions spelled out on the screen. The IMS function confirms each item you program into it, and a battery-powered backup system retains the information up to a week even when the AC power is cut.

Other features include 105-channel cable-ready tuning, two-speed recording, and three-speed playback. The timer records four programs over four weeks.

Special-effect features include silent still frame, frame advance, quick-finder search, auto rewind, and a tape-view system that backlights the cassette hubs to visually confirm the amount of tape remaining.

Price: \$599.95.

For additional information,  
circle No. 176 on Reader Service Card.

### Tatung Adds One-Touch Recording to VCR Line

Tatung has introduced the VRH-8500U VHS VCR with one-touch recording. The front-loading model has 105-channel tuning and 14-day/8-event programming capabilities. An infrared remote control has 9 functions. Up to 14 channels can be preset on the 4-head machine.

Price: \$599.95.

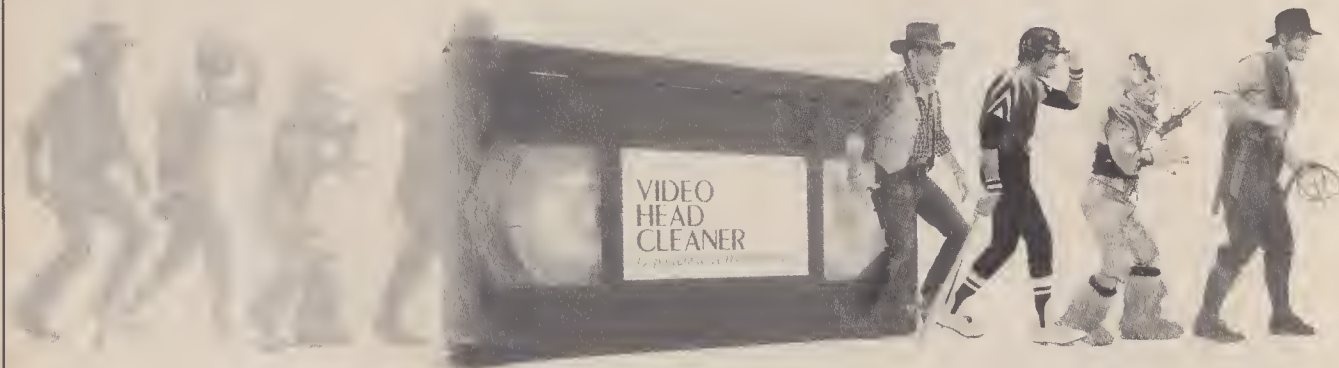
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# Discwasher® The clear choice for video care.

Tape oxides can build up on your VCR tape heads. Result? Fuzzy picture, mushy sound. The answer? Discwasher Video Head Cleaner. It's a revolutionary, patent-pending, non-abrasive dry

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The sound and sight come through clean and clear.  
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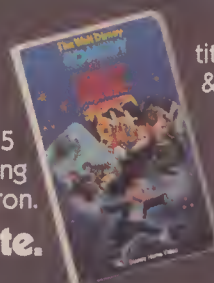


## Give the best of Disney for \$29<sup>95</sup>.

This holiday, give your child the magic of the one and only Pinocchio. The wonder of Dumbo. And the splendor of Mary Poppins. Give the joy of a Disney Home Video cassette.

Choose from 21 Disney treasures, now just \$29.95 each. Ride with Robin Hood. Share the heart-warming tale of Old Yeller. Or enter the futuristic world of Tron.

**Disney's \$9<sup>95</sup> bonus cassette.**



And as our holiday gift to you, buy any Disney title and get our never-before-released Comedy & Magic Revue for just \$9.95.

But hurry. At these low prices, Disney is selling out faster than you can say Jiminy Cricket.

**WALT DISNEY HOME VIDEO**

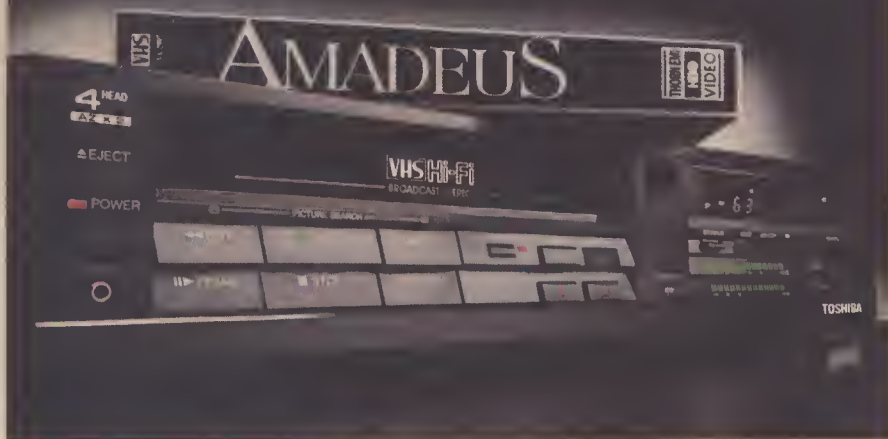
*Making your dreams come true.*

\*Suggested retail price. Limited time only.  
Walt Disney Home Video distributed by Walt Disney Telecommunications and Non-Theatrical Co. Burbank, California 91521

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# Hear it the way Mozart wrote it.



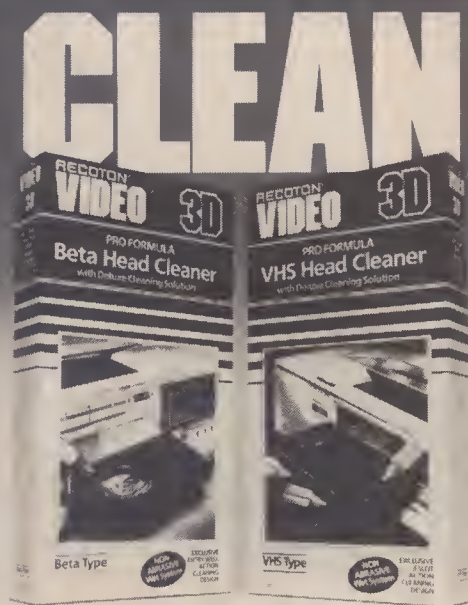
Now that movies come in hi-fi stereo, you can hear something that used to be unheard of: pure, high fidelity sound. But you need the right VCR. Toshiba's new M-5900 VHS. It has a dynamic range of 80 db, and virtually no wow or flutter. Plus 4 heads, 117 channel capability and wireless remote control.

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**RECOTON 3D PRO FORMULA VCR CLEANERS DO MORE THAN JUST CLEAN HEADS!** They clean the *entire* tape path including video and audio heads, capstan, pinchroller, and tape guides. As the Pro Formula Cleaning Solution gently dissolves residual tape oxide, dust and dirt on contact, Recoton 3D captures these contaminants in a non-abrasive fibernet cleaning material and safely whisks them away. It's as simple as dropping in a cassette and pressing play...

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## New Products

### NEC Fattens FST Line With 26 & 14-Inch Monitors

Joining NEC's CT-2020 20-inch full square tube (FST) monitor—profiled in September 1984's "New Products"—are two models with different screen sizes. The CT-2610A is 26 inches, while the CT-1420A is 14.

The 14-incher sports a 142-channel cable-ready digital tuner with skip memory, full-function wireless remote, comb filter for top image resolution, and pre-settable sleep timer. The 26-inch model adds a selectable dual antenna system with decoder outputs, circuitry to simulate stereo from a monaural signal, and built-in MTS/SAP decoder for stereo broadcast reception. Automatic circuitry built into the unit includes black-level retention, peak white-level suppression, and fleshtone correction. Responding to consumer demand, NEC also added both fixed and variable audio monitor output levels for use with recording and other external equipment.

Prices: CT-2610A, \$1000; CT-1420A, \$500.



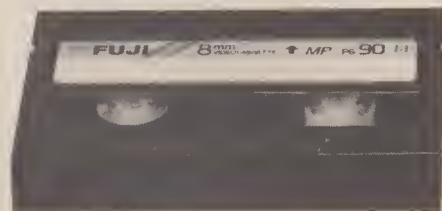
NEC CT-2610A

For additional information,  
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### Fuji Sets New 'Standard' For Lower-Grade Tapes

Until now most blank-tape makers have given short shrift to their standard-grade tapes, preferring to create and refine the products at the top of their lines. That's starting to change. Fuji has announced improvements in its standard-grade tape. The new Fuji Fine Grain Beridox series will replace the company's current standard-grade line.

The Beridox formulation boosts video and color signal-to-noise ratio by 2dB and upgrades all audio characteristics by 0.5dB. Fuji reduced the size of the magnetic particles by half while increasing





# There's no place like home.

Return to the land  
where the adventure began.

## RETURN TO OZ

Return to Oz' picks up where the original masterpiece [Wizard of Oz] ended: a wondrous movie filled with the awe and innocence of childhood storybook fiction. "

Rex Reed, The New York Post

WALT DISNEY PICTURES presents "RETURN TO OZ" Produced in association with **STILL SCREEN PARTNERS II**  
Starring **NICOL WILLIAMSON JEAN MARSH PIPER LAURIE** Introducing **FARELEA BALK** Executive Producer **GARY KURTZ**  
Music by **DAVID SHIRE** Screenplay by **WALTER MURCH & GILL DENNIS** Produced by **PAUL MASLANSKY**  
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**WALT DISNEY HOME VIDEO**

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## VCR Protection Kit Contains: VCR HEAD CLEANER QUILTED DUST COVER

**Our VCR HEAD CLEANER CASSETTE** improves picture quality and reduces head wear—cleans an entire tape track—audio and video—in just seconds! Specially formulated fluid included.

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☐ Enclose \$1.00 for Video Accessories Catalog. Dealer inquiries invited. Write on your letterhead for information.

## New Products

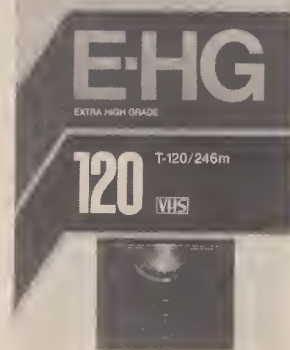
the uniformity of their distribution throughout the magnetic layer.

In other Fuji tape news, the firm announced it will make metal-particle 8mm videocassettes in 30-, 60-, and 90-minute lengths.

Prices: T-30, \$8.69; T-60, \$9.09; T-90, \$9.49; T-120, \$9.99; T-160, \$15.99. L-125, \$6.99; L-250, \$7.49; L-370, \$7.99; L-500, \$8.59; L-750, \$9.99. 8mm: to be announced.

For additional information,  
circle No. 179 on Reader Service Card.

**TDK**



## TDK Brings Out New E-HG Formulations

New videotape formulations from TDK—which produced many of the most highly rated tapes in Lancelot Braithwaite's "Official VIDEO Magazine Blank Tape Tests" (February 1985)—come in both Extra High grade (E-HG) and High Standard (HS) types.

The High Standard is a step above TDK's conventional standard-grade tape and is said to share some components with TDK's premium lines. The Extra High Grade is designed as the first step out of the standard-grade category, with increased video signal-to-noise ratio (+4.5dB), chroma signal-to-noise ratio (+5.5dB), video RF output level (+2.4dB), audio frequency response (+2dB), and audio sensitivity (+1dB).

For reference, the complete TDK lineup runs as follows, from top of the line to bottom: HD-Pro, Hi-Fi, Extra High Grade, High Standard, and Super Avilyn Standard.

Prices: E-HG T-120, \$11.80; E-HG L-500, \$8.20; HS T-120, \$10.00; HS L-750, \$10.80.

For additional information,  
circle No. 180 on Reader Service Card.

## Sony's UHG Is Its Highest-Grade Formula

With the increasing popularity of high-grade tape formulations, Sony has brought out a new series of tapes that exceeds the quality of its previous High Grade. The Sony Ultra High Grade



# GO BACK A FEW YEARS.

The  
Long-Awaited  
Premiere!

M-I-C K-E-Y M-O-U-S-E. Annette.  
"Spin and Marty." Talent Roundup. Mouse  
Ears. Roy and Jimmie. "The Hardy Boys."  
Mousekartoon Time.

Walt Disney Home Video presents the  
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America grew up with...now on video for  
you to share with *your* children. All in  
fifteen collector's edition volumes,  
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Each with a specially produced  
introduction starring the most popular  
Mouseketeer of all, Annette Funicello!  
Relive those carefree days. Share them  
with *your* kids. And join the jamboree!

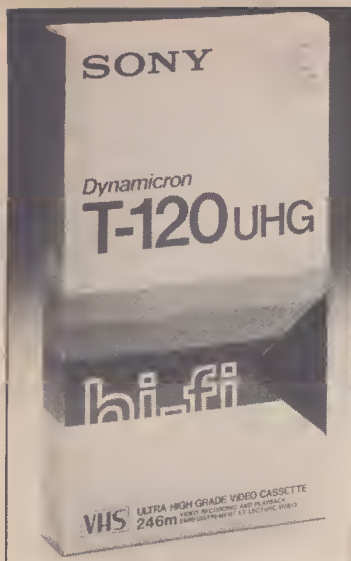


**\$49<sup>95</sup> EACH** Suggested Retail Price

**WALT DISNEY  
HOME VIDEO**

Walt Disney Home Video distributed by Walt Disney Telecommunications and Non-Theatrical Company, Burbank, California 91521. Printed in U.S.A. (HV-1578-MCA) © 1985 Walt Disney Productions.

For additional information, circle No. 17 on Reader Service Card.



(UHG) "Hi-Fi" cassettes offer improvements in video and color signal-to-noise ratio of 2dB as well as an increase of 1.5dB in audio S/N. According to the manufacturer, users of UHG tape should expect to see sharper outlines, higher contrast ratios, brighter images, and higher color resolution with less signal degradation and fewer dropouts.

The UHG tapes are available in Beta lengths of L-830, L-750, L-500, L-250, and L-125 as well as VHS lengths of T-120, T-90, and T-60.

Prices: L-830UHG, \$23.30; L-750UHG, \$16.70; L-500UHG, \$13.75; L-250UHG, \$10.55; L-125UHG, \$9.20.

T-120, \$16.70; T-90, \$14.99; T-60, \$12.69.

For additional information,  
circle No. 181 on Reader Service Card.

### JVC Expands TC-20 Line With Dynarec HGS Tape

The popularity of the VHSC camcorders by JVC and Zenith has prompted JVC to introduce another variation of the required TC-20 cassette: the JVC Dynarec TC-20 HG Super.

In addition to use in the VHSC

camcorders, JVC suggests using the mini-cassette (with adapter) in a tabletop VCR. The HG Super line, of which this tape is a part, was engineered for high performance at the slowest (EP or SLP speeds). The drastically reduced size of the TC-20 makes it convenient for storing taped lectures or audio-only Hi-Fi recordings.

Price: \$8.50.

For additional information,  
circle No. 182 on Reader Service Card.



# HARD vs. SOFT

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# How to pick a video system with your eyes closed.

by Ray Charles

"I look at video systems a little differently than you.

I look with my ears.

And, frankly, since the beginning, video has sounded pretty sad.

Then along comes Pioneer with LaserDisc. And suddenly, my ears get very happy.

The sound of LaserDisc is as good as anything I ever heard on my stereo.

Maybe better.

And while I was impressed with the sound, the video experts were floored by the picture. They tell me nothing else even comes close.

Maybe you've already got a stereo, and maybe you've already got a VCR. You've still got to get LaserDisc. Because whatever you're watching — music or movies — LaserDisc does what no other system can do. For the first time, it brings the best picture and the best sound together."

The model shown here is the Pioneer® CLD-900. The world's first combination LaserVision and CD player.

Prices start at \$299. Suggested retail price.

LaserDisc™ brand videodisc player is a trademark of Pioneer Electronics Corp.  
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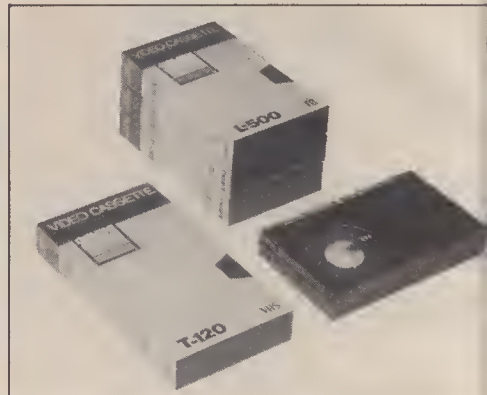
For additional information, circle No. 20 on Reader Service Card.

## New Products

### Introducing a New Blank-Tape Name: Gemini

Gemini is a new name in videotape, though its video/cable accessories are slightly better known. Gemini's high-output Beta and VHS tapes—with the format logos on the packages—come in L-500 and T-120 lengths.

Prices: not available.



For additional information,  
circle No. 183 on Reader Service Card.

### Radio Shack Extender Hikes Remotes' Ranges

If you've ever lamented the limited reach of a remote control, Radio Shack may have the solution. The Archer Video Remote Control Extender (Cat. No. 15-1289) increases the range of a variety of remote-control units for TVs, VCRs, satellite receivers, cable converters, and other devices. The two-piece unit is easy to install and uses standard coaxial cable.

Price: \$49.95.



For additional information,  
circle No. 184 on Reader Service Card.

### Universal Switchers Help Route Signals

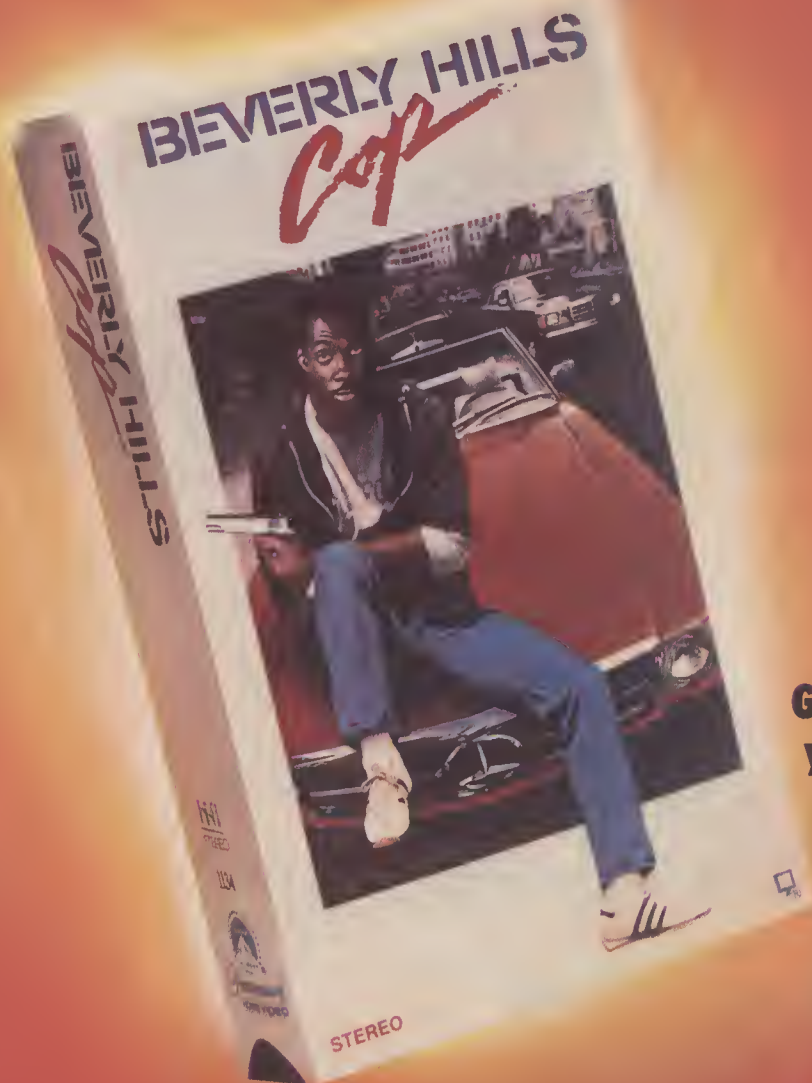
To help multi-component videophiles master the complexities of routing signals through their sprawling systems, Universal Security Instruments makes the VX Series Switchers. The V-4401 (pictured) hooks up four inputs to one





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## New Products

output. The V-4402 connects four inputs to two outputs. And the V-4603 interfaces six inputs to three outputs.

Prices: V-4401, \$34.99; V-4402, \$71.99; V-4603, \$110.99.

For additional information, circle No. 185 on Reader Service Card.

### Panasonic Unit Upgrades, Integrates A/V Systems

Panasonic has a device that can help you integrate your video and audio components into a single system. It's the TU-1014 video controller/tuner.

Three sets of audio/video inputs/outputs can handle the demands of all but

the most obsessive videophiles, while fixed and variable audio outputs bring compatibility with most audio setups. The 1014 even has one switched and two unswitched AC outputs on the back-panel. Decoder circuitry provides MTS/SAP stereo broadcast reception. Finally, a remote control allows control of the unit, including all inputs.

A cautionary note from Panasonic: If you subscribe to a cable service, a cable-compatible model will let you tune in most unscrambled cable channels without an external converter box. If you get scrambled channels, you will need a de-

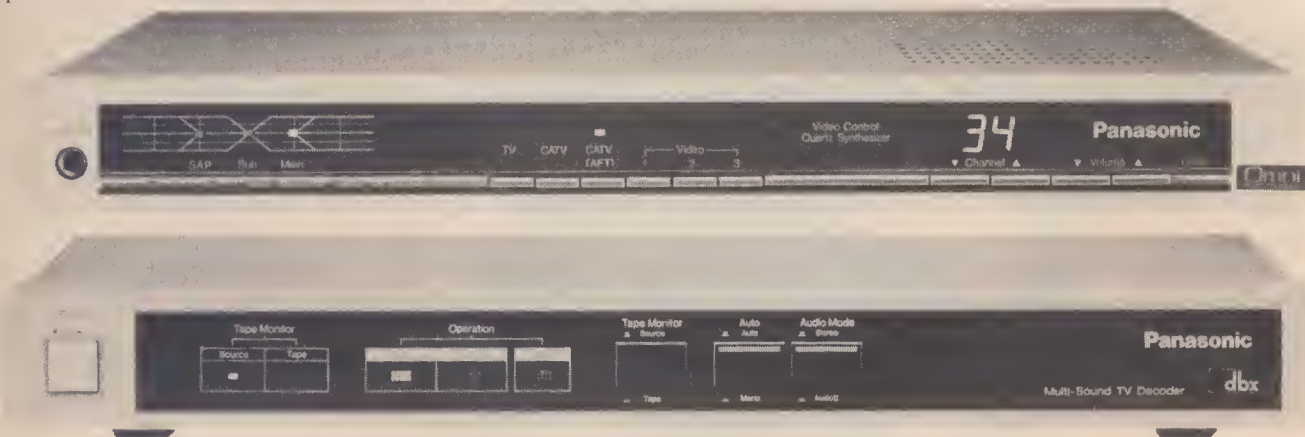
scrambler to view those channels. Check with your local cable operator for more information.

Price: \$499.

For additional information, circle No. 186 on Reader Service Card.

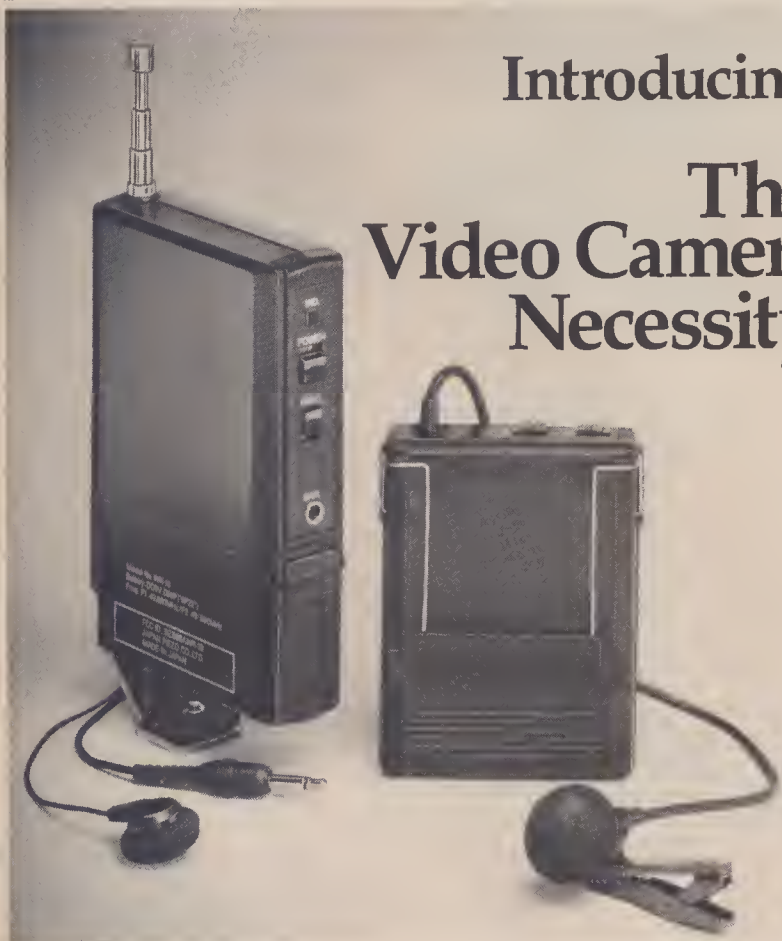
### Panasonic MTS Adapter Upgrades Existing Sets

Panasonic's TUG-3010S stereo decoder/adaptor converts Panasonic TVs—including rack systems and projection TVs—to MTS/SAP stereo broadcast use. The unit switches automatically from mono to stereo when a stereo broadcast signal is available. Controls in-



Above: Panasonic TU-1014 video controller/tuner; Below: Panasonic TUG-3010S stereo decoder/adaptor.

## Introducing The Video Camera Necessity



Extend the dimensions of your video taping capabilities with the new AZDEN WMS-10 wireless remote-microphone transmitter/receiver. Now you can record from a distance (up to 100 feet) with up-close clarity, avoiding all extraneous noises.

The receiver attaches securely to the video camera and plugs into the ext. mic jack. It even has a monitor earphone! The compact transmitter clips to the subjects belt, etc., and the unobtrusive microminiature microphone clips to a tie, lapel, or collar. Choose from two frequencies (49.83 KHz or 49.89kHz) for the cleanest sound!

Now you can record that wedding and capture the "I do"!

Once you've used the WMS-10 and discovered all of its possible applications, you'll wonder how you've gotten along without it.

For more information contact:

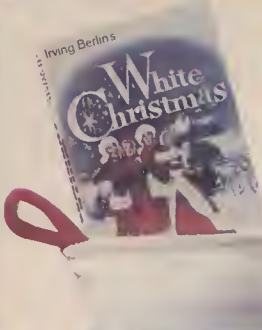
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## New Products

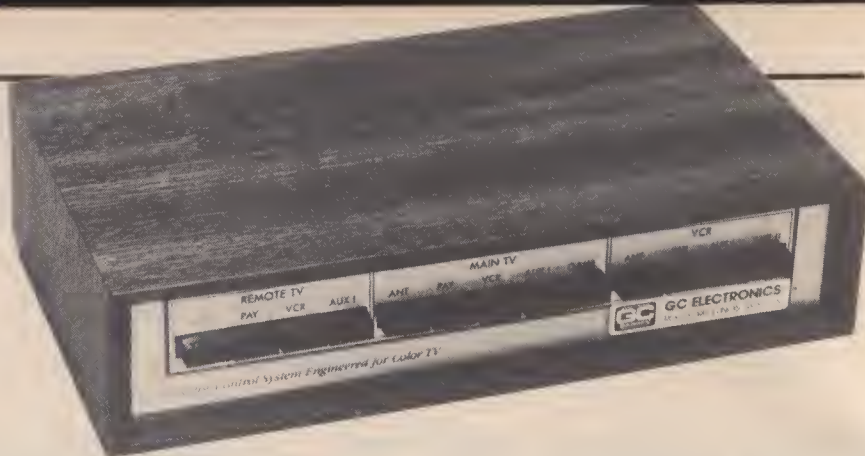
clude Tape Monitor (Source/Tape), Audio (Auto/Mono), and Audio mode (Stereo/Audio II). The relevant TV models are: CTF-2670R, CTF-2684R, CTF-2688R, CT-5379RS, CT-3700S, CTG-2075R, and the PTF-4073RS projection TV.

Price: \$149.

For additional information,  
circle No. 187 on Reader Service Card.

## GC Switcher Offers Video Options

The Selector Control System/Video



Master Switcher (32-3220) from GC Electronics helps organize growing video systems. Under "Remote TV" switches are provided to select between Ant(enna), Pay, VCR, and Aux(iliary) I. Under "Main TV," the selections are Ant, Pay, VCR, Aux I, and Game. The options under "VCR" are Ant, Pay, Aux I, and Aux II. All controls are the piano-key type.

Price: \$71.30.

For additional information,  
circle No. 188 on Reader Service Card.

# The *Best* Movie Catalogue You've Ever Owned... Or Your Money Back.

## Introducing the first movie catalogue with a point of view.

Reading most other video catalogues you get the feeling that every movie is a great classic that "can't be missed." But you know that's not true and so do we. Every movie listed in our brand new catalogue comes with a review that tells you the truth. Some reviews will make you laugh, others may make you angry. But their honesty and down-to-earth style will make shopping for movies almost as much fun as watching them. If you're tired of run-of-the-Hollywood-mill hype— you'll find our catalogue a breath of fresh air.

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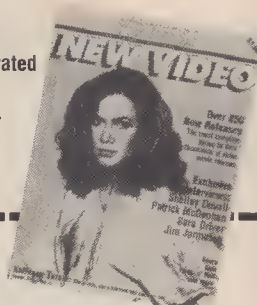
New Video's buying department searches through over 150 different sources looking for movies worth owning. Each month hundreds of movies are released. Quite frankly, most of these videocassettes are, to put it nicely, junk. But through it all, our staff of movie lovers has come up with the most interesting selection you'll ever want to see. Sure, many of them never won an Oscar— but they caught our

attention and we think they'll catch yours. New Video is known (and, this is not an overstatement) throughout the world as "the Source" for foreign films, cult movies, and hard-to-find classics. If it's on video and worth seeing, you'll find it here. Period.

## Our Ironclad Unconditional Here, Take Your Money Back— Guarantee

Our catalogue costs \$3.50. Some of our competitors offer theirs for free. Others charge more. But the truth is, there is no comparison. If you enjoy video, you'll enjoy it more with our "one-of-a-kind" catalogue. Use the form below and order your catalogue today. If you do not agree that this is, by far, the most interesting \$3.50 investment you've ever made— write us for a prompt, courteous refund. You have sixty-days to make up your mind— it may take you that long to go through all the reviews!

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## Unison Tape Winder Uses Electronic Sensor

Unison Electronics says its PRO-Video videocassette winders are different from the competition. According to Unison, most less costly tape winders use mechanical devices to sense the end of the tape, and these can stretch or even break the tape off the spool.

The PRO-Video winder operates differently. Its electronic tape-end sensor gently stops the winding cycle in either rewind or fast forward. A resettable digital counter helps locate specific spots on the tape, and the motor is double-shielded to prevent the tape's demagnetization (damage to program material).

Price: \$54.95.



For additional information,  
circle No. 189 on Reader Service Card.

## Isobar Surge Suppressor Affords Variable Protection

Tripp Lite's Isobar is a surge suppressor/octopus adapter available in four- and eight-outlet versions. The device is arranged in "filter banks" wired in series. That means that each successive filter bank offers twice the surge protection of





With their champagne gold styling, Luxman components are at home in the most elegant of settings—from traditional to contemporary.

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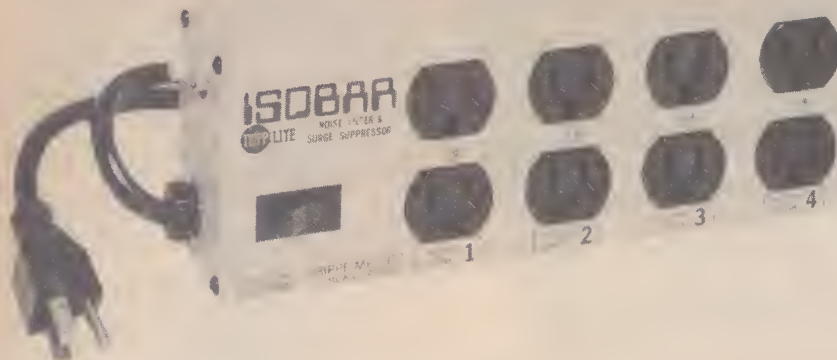
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the previous one. Thus the user can apply differing levels of protection to each component of his video or computer system, weighting protection levels to favor expensive and/or delicate IC-filled components. The units plug into the wall with a three-prong grounded plug and have an on/off switch.

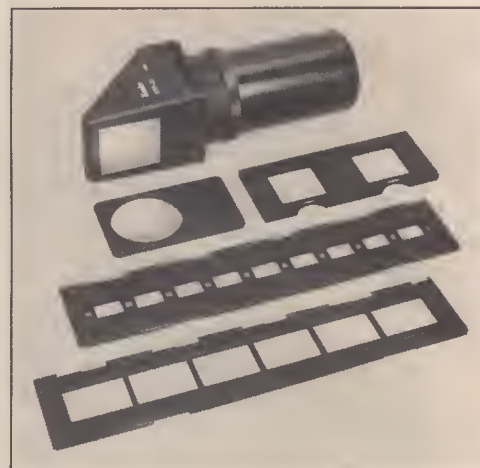
Prices: starting at \$79.95 for the four-outlet/two-filter-bank version.

For additional information,  
circle No. 190 on Reader Service Card.

## Kenko Telecine Adapter Transfers Film to Tape

Transferring 8mm movies and transparencies to videotape is easy with the Kenko SDV10 telecine video adapter. The kit includes a main adapter that attaches to the camera lens, film holders, and a correcting filter.

Price: \$130.



For additional information,  
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Yamaha Electronics

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## Ambico Val-U-Series Offers Affordable Widgets

Even home video makers on the low end of the pricing totem pole can afford the Val-U-Series of video accessories from Ambico.



The Val-U-Lite—model V-1000 for AC use and V-8500 for AC/DC operation—has a heat-absorbing shield for cooler and safer performance. The V-8000 Val-U-Power-Pack fuels a VCR for



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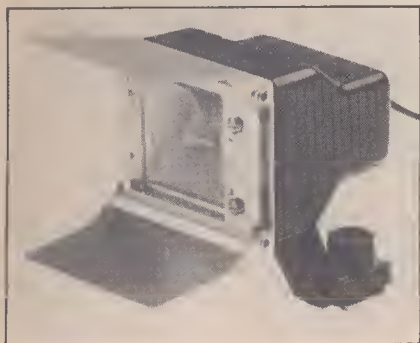
A Tale of Two Cities, Captains Courageous, David Copperfield, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Dragon Seed, Ivanhoe, Knights of the Round Table, Little Women, Madame Bovary, Mutiny on the Bounty, National Velvet, Pride and Prejudice, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, The Good Earth, The Prisoner of Zenda, The Red Badge of Courage, The Three Musketeers, The Yearling, Treasure Island.

\*Manufacturer's suggested list price

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## New Products



up to four hours; built-in fuses offer extra protection. The Val-U-Lens Kit, Model V-300, has telephoto and wide-angle attachments as well as step rings to fit various video cameras. It comes with carry case. The V-5000 Val-U-Tripod comes in a black finish and has tubular legs.

Prices: ranging from \$39.95 (V-5000) to \$129.95 (V-8500).

For additional information,  
circle No. 192 on Reader Service Card.



### Challenger Battery Wins Design Award

Award Winner Corp. has lived up to its name with an engineering design award from the July Consumer Electronics Show for its Challenger line of rechargeable battery packs. The Challenger Power Source II delivers up to 6 hours of power and can be recharged up to 1500 times.

The nickel-cadmium 12-volt battery weighs a light 3-1/2 lbs. Other features include a built-in automatic resetting 10-amp circuit breaker, a metal female receptacle, and an ambient temperature thermo protector. The nylon carrying case includes a two-inch-thick adjustable shoulder strap.

Price: \$259.95.

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### Kiwi's Got a Brand-New Bag for 8mm, VHSC

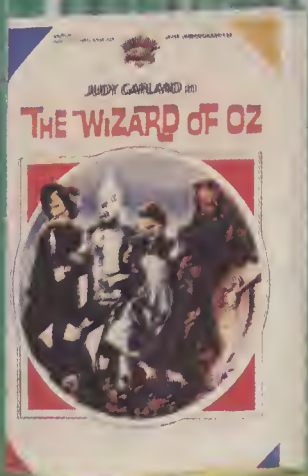
With the dawn of the 8mm age and the continuing popularity of VHSC, many videophiles could use a carry bag designed for that very gear—and Kiwi makes one: the VCR-65.

The VCR-65 is made of lightweight waterproof nylon with closed-cell foam/






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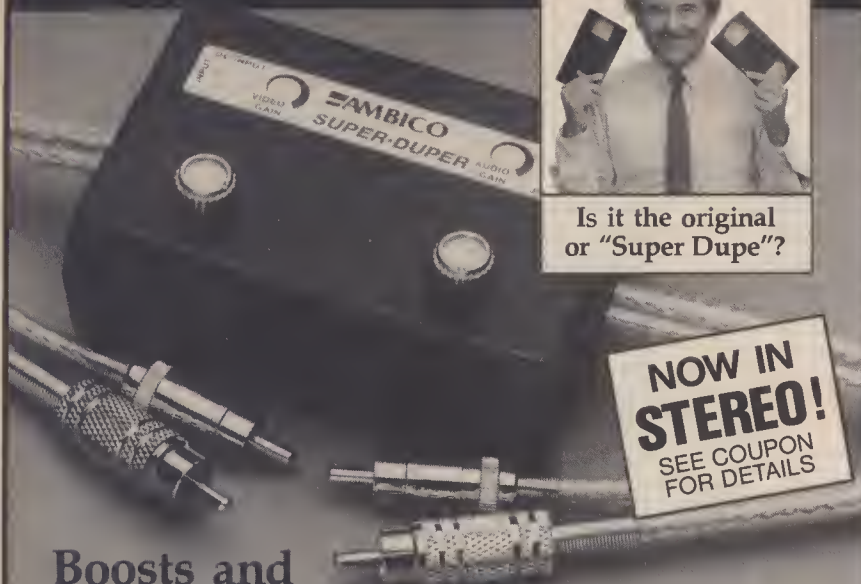
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## New Products

soft nylon linings. The seams are sewn with heavy-duty nylon boot thread. Nylon webbing provides material for the straps and handles, while Velcro closures seal the bag whenever the lid is down. This automatic closure prevents careless accidents while still permitting easy access to the machine. An outside Velcro pocket holds extra cassettes or other accessories.

The bag weighs only 1-3/4 pounds, measures 15 by 9 by 10 inches, and comes in two colors: black and smoke. Like all Kiwi bags it comes with a lifetime guarantee.

Price: \$79.95.

For additional information,  
circle No. 194 on Reader Service Card.

## Carter Craft Covers Fit Most VCR Models

Carter Craft makes form-fitting dust covers to fit a variety of video and computer equipment. Of special interest to videophiles is the 60-400 dust cover, which is universal for VHS or Beta equipment, according to the manufacturer, as well as several video games, computer disk drives, and computer printers.

Price: \$7.55.



For additional information,  
circle No. 195 on Reader Service Card.

## Proton Video Racks House Proton Gear

The Proton R25 and R19 equipment racks are designed to house Proton gear though they could also be used for equipment by other manufacturers.

The R25 is built to accommodate the 602M 25-inch monitor, 600T video tuner, and 303 speakers, with room left over for an audio system, an LV disc player, or a couple of VCRs. The R19 is





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You're invited to celebrate with MOTOWN's greatest stars, performing some of the greatest hits of all time. Two hours of live music —featuring 30 minutes of new MOTOWN footage available *only* on this videocassette. And rare clips from the 50s and 60s. Available at fine video stores now.

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the right size for a 600M 19-inch monitor, a 600T video tuner, and 302 speakers. Also available is an audio rack, R11, for Proton audio components.

The racks, with glass doors and casters, measure 40-1/5 by 21-1/3 by 19 inches (R25), 35-2/5 by 21-1/3 by 19 (T19), and 19-1/4 by 35 by 18 (R11).

Price: \$250 ea.

For additional information,  
circle No. 196 on Reader Service Card.



### Video Clappers Assist Home Videomakers

Overcoated for easy wipe-off, Sunway Products' Video Clappers help facilitate editing, seek and search, production IDs, freeze frames, sequencing, and showing start/end points. The back's shot function list helps order the sequence of shots, angles, lights, and so on.

Price: \$39.95.

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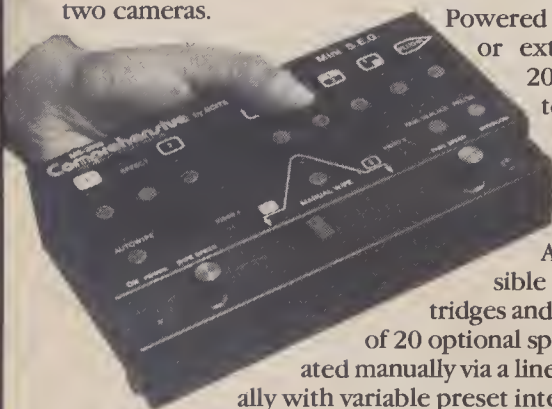
### Hold on Tight With Gripmate

Frustrated from cutting your fingers with a knife as you strip a cable to attach leads? Get a grip on yourself with the Gripmate. The gadget features a C-clamp base with four interchangeable arms (semi-rigid insulated wires). The arms hold alligator clips for any delicate soldering, wiring, or assembly that requires more hands than your allotted

## A Portable, Professional S.E.G. for Only \$1,099!

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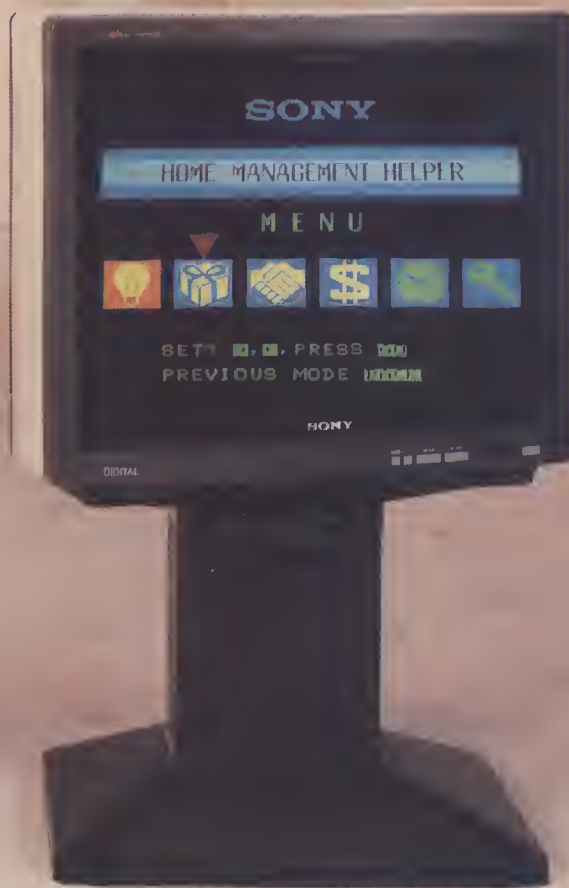
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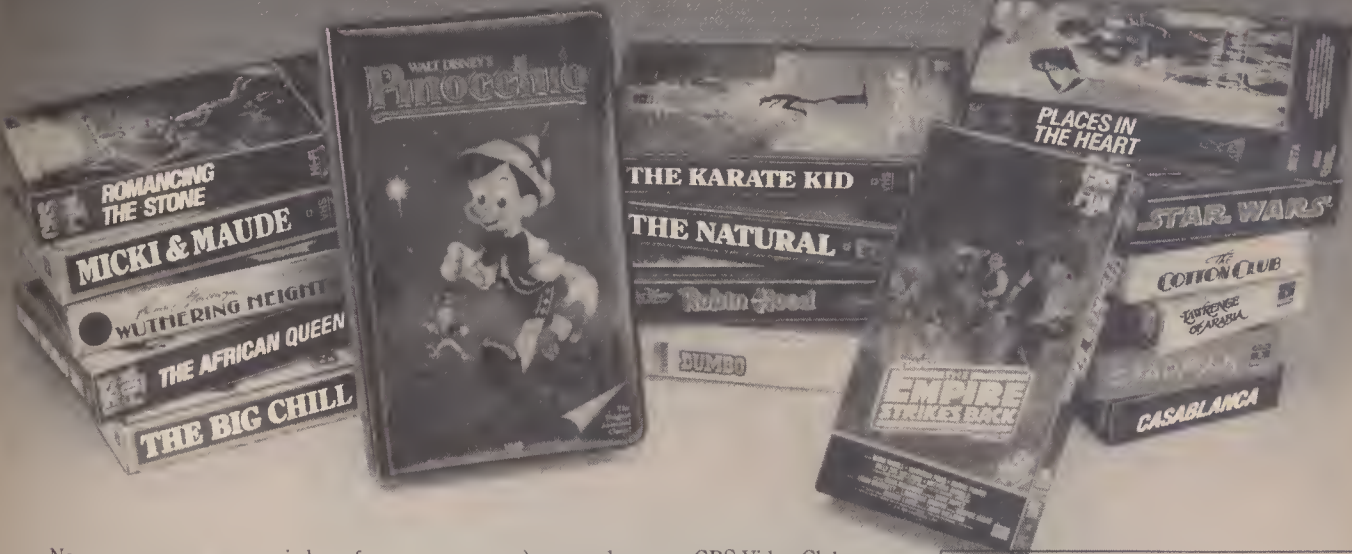
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ON GOLDEN POND	0523162	REVENGE OF THE NERDS	0925022	JANE FONDA'S WORKOUT CHALLENGE	5260042
THE AFRICAN QUEEN	0511022	COTTON CLUB	3100032	STAR WARS	0564162
PINOCCIO	1511002	EDUCATING RITA	1593012	THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK	0910092
THE SOUND OF MUSIC	0039212	STARMAN	1723042	DUMBO	5251052
COUNTRY	5341072	ANNIE	1516052	ROBIN HODD (Walt Disney's)	5299092
THE NATURAL	1649052	JOHNNY DANGEROUSLY	0980042	CABARET	4001272
PORKY'S	0775112	WUTHERING HEIGHTS	3126032	THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	0534212
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PLACES IN THE HEART	0978082	THE WAY WE WERE	1529002	GOLDFINGER	0539002
SILKWOOD	3106072	RED RIVER	7507032	THE SPY WHO LOVED ME	0629012
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# Fine Tuning

## Your Video Questions Answered

### by Roderick Woodcock

#### Beta Blues

**Q** I'm a depressed Beta owner. I sold my Sony SL-2000 portable VCR and camera and replaced it with the BMC-220 Betamovie because of the greater handling convenience. Unfortunately, I sacrificed the versatility of the SL-2000. It was a good machine for tape editing and could replay my camera recordings. Since the Betamovie appeared, I have not been able to find another portable in the Beta format. Are there any companies who still offer a portable like the Sony SL-2000? Also, why are some Beta machines being sold as "Hi-Fi ready"? Why can't they simply include Hi-Fi in all machines? I wouldn't buy a machine if I had to buy an adapter to add the Hi-Fi capability later on. You simply can't beat the sound quality of Hi-Fi.

Bruce Armbruster  
APO, N.Y.

**A** Sorry, but the day of the two-piece portable Beta VCR appears to be over. The last machine available was the Toshiba V-X34, discontinued this past summer. Sony dropped its SL-2000 last year, and the last portable it sold was the SL-2005, a similar but limited-edition machine with a black finish. Sony's industrial division claims that the SLO-340 industrial portable is still available, but this ungainly 20-

pound monster records only at the BI speed.

The day of the camcorder has truly arrived, at least as far as Beta is concerned. If you find the design of the Betamovie too limiting, you have a couple of choices. You could look around for a used SL-2000 portable (or comparable machine) and go back to what you were using. Or you could opt for a camcorder in another format (VHS or 8mm) which offers you some of the features missing from Betamovie, such as an electronic viewfinder, record review, playback through the viewfinder, and A/V input and output capability so that you can use it as either a source player or editing recorder. If you used it as a player, you could of course edit your tapes onto any other format you wish, including Beta.

As for "Hi-Fi Ready" VCRs, these machines are sold only by Sony. The rationale behind their design is that some consumers would prefer to initially forgo the Hi-Fi capability and then add it later when they can afford it. But I agree that most people already sold on Hi-Fi would prefer to buy a machine with the feature built in, especially now that the price of many base-model Beta Hi-Fi decks (like Sanyo's VCR-7150) has dropped to a very affordable \$350 (or less).

#### A Nice Pair

**Q** I have a pair of G.E. portable VCRs in the 3020X series and the RM-R500 Editing Controller. Insert edits are clean, but just about every other assemble edit

has a "rainbow" that lasts a second or two after the edit point. A friend of mine has virtually the same Matsushita-made equipment as me but under the Magnavox label. On his equipment, however, he gets an almost undetectable rainbow in only one out of nine edits. I understand the technical reasons for the "rainbows," but why the difference between different VCRs from the same manufacturer?

Bill Southworth  
Woodland Hills, CA

**A** I've received letters from lots of readers with similar complaints—namely, that so-called "glitch free" or "noise free" editing circuits simply don't perform as consistently as they should. The visual effect—whether you call it staining, rainbow, moire, or discoloration—is extremely annoying, especially when you are trying to create a professional-looking effect. It's caused, of course, by the back spacing effect itself, where the new segment of video overlaps the tail end of the older segment: video superimposed on video.

In normal recording, a tape that already has been used once doesn't exhibit this problem because a special erase head removes all traces of the old signal before the new one is recorded. Ideally, that's what these backspace-editing circuits should do too. But since the amount of tape being backspaced at the edit point is slight, they try to eliminate the staining simply by boosting the strength of the re-

cording current applied to the video heads. As you've discovered, the quality of the edits achieved in this way can vary considerably, even between supposedly identical machines. A serviceman can sometimes (but not always) improve the quality of the edits.

Ironically, some of the best "editing" decks I've seen were those that didn't employ the supposedly more sophisticated backspace editing feature. JVC's HR-2200, discontinued for several years, is one example that has now become a "classic" VCR sought out by some video aficionados.

The only consumer VCR that I've seen which delivers consistently glitch-free edits every time is Sony's new Video 8 camcorder (also sold under the Fuji, Kyocera, Sanyo, and Pioneer brand names) which uses "flying erase" heads to achieve truly professional looking edits. Beta and VHS equipment using flying erase heads also exists, but only as professional equipment costing much more than consumer-grade stuff.

The bottom line is that the video manufacturers (who sell to both the consumer and the professional, but frequently through separate divisions) have been too slow to appreciate nonprofessionals' growing interest in sophisticated video features. That's also ironic considering that they have created this demand themselves by writing ad copy and brochures that extol "professional" features that, when you get down to it, don't deliver what they claim.

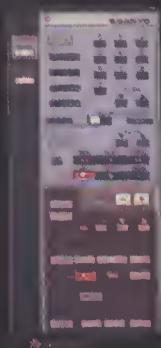


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## Don't Color My World

**Q** I own a Panasonic PK-959 camera and am using it with a JVC HR-S10U portable. When I leave the camera in pause and then resume shooting, I can see a rainbow streak or a glitch across the tape at that point when viewing it later. The JVC HR-S10U is advertised as having automatic backspace capability to produce clean assembled recordings. Are the camera and deck incompatible? I need clean in-camera edits and no matter what grade of tape I use, I still see a rainbow drift across the screen.

Jim O'Brien  
New York

**A** The problem isn't in the tape you're using. It's in the equipment. Though they aren't the same make, your camera and VCR combo should be compatible as long as the tape starts and stops on cue when you press the trigger on the camera. The tape backspacing is a VCR feature, not a camera feature. As for why you aren't getting clean edits, see the previous letter.

## Heckle & Speckle

**Q** Do I need glasses or is it true that a heck of a lot of LV discs have tiny white speckles throughout the picture? And are they as prone to warping as I think they are? As VCRs approach disc players in audio/video quality (SuperBeta, VHS HQ), it's a shame that the CAV format is virtually dead and buried. High picture quality would seem to be the final LV advantage. Or do the disc people care?

John Mainelli  
San Diego, Calif.

**A** The official technical name for the "speckled" phenomenon you describe is "inclusion"—a reference to impurities like dirt, dust, and other microscopic contaminants that get "included" between the two layers of the disc during manufacturing. I was given this explanation a couple of years ago during a tour of Pioneer's Carson, California disc-pressing plant.

During the tour I also discovered how really difficult it is to turn a videotaped master of a feature film into an optical videodisc. Fortunately, Pioneer's technicians and engineers continue to refine the process. The current "state of the art" is light years ahead of where it was in the old MCA DiscoVision days.

Pioneer will replace any disc flawed by inclusion. Just return it to your dealer. Many LV dealers also tend to be quality-sensitive and some will even let you "sample" a disc on one of their in-store players before you take it home.

Warping remains a problem owing to the large surface area of the disc, but can be minimized by proper storage and handling. A warped disc can often be

flattened simply by pressing it between two sheets of heavy wood or glass for several days.

As for the CAV issue, I agree that the splendid special effects available in this subformat are what attracted me to it in the first place and that more CAV releases—such as Criterion's *Citizen Kane*—are in order. But that decision is up to the software vendors and to Pioneer. You can put your views on the record by writing to Pioneer: 200 West Grand Avenue, Montvale, N.J. 07645.

## Matchmaker

**Q** I own a Zenith VR-2100 four-head VCR and a Magnavox VR-8405 two-head VCR. I would like to know what would make for a sharper, better-quality dub—recording from the Magnavox into the Zenith or the other way around?

Carlos Garcia  
West New York, N.J.

**A** A timely question. As a general rule I'd recommend using the Magnavox as the player and the Zenith as the recorder, owing to the latter's wider SP video heads. But in some cases you may find that if the tape you propose to dub originally had been recorded on the Magnavox, it will play better on that machine than on the Zenith, since the video tracks and heads will match better.

These recommendations, however, apply only to tapes made and recorded at SP. If you intend to copy an EP tape to SP go from the Magnavox to the Zenith. Should you want to copy an EP tape and record it in EP (a qualitatively hideous idea) you can go either way, since the head widths employed at this slowest speed are virtually identical on each machine.

## Frozen Landscapes

**Q** I take home videos of scenery and children. Sometimes, when I get just the right scene or pose, I like to pause the tape and take a 35mm picture of the frame so that I can later print from it. Sometimes I get a beautiful still frame but other times there is a lot of distortion. Do you know of any way that I can avoid this?

Marion Thompson  
Clermont, Fla.

**A** While you haven't mentioned the model number or brand name of your VCR, it's clear from your letter that it is not equipped with a clean still-frame feature. Many current VCRs, however, offer noise-free special effects like still frame, frame-by-frame advance and variable-speed slow motion that would give you what you want.

If these machines are outside your price range, or if you don't want to trade up to a more deluxe machine just to obtain this one feature, then about all you can do is make several attempts to get a

"clean" still frame of what you want using your current VCR. You may find it necessary to rewind or backscan the tape several times until you obtain a still frame that can be photographed. Occasionally, if the still frame is just short of perfect, with a trace of noise at the bottom of the picture, it can sometimes be eliminated by tapping gently on the top of the machine.

## Clean & Unclean


**Q** I recently had a problem with a wet-system video head cleaner. I've had my Zenith VR-4000 VCR for about seven months and have used it about 40 hours. The picture was still clear but I thought a routine cleaning wouldn't hurt. After I used the cleaner, the playback picture was very snowy. I took the VCR in to an authorized Zenith service center and they had to clean the heads to remove the residue left by the head cleaning cassette. The bill came to \$64.20, which I could have avoided if I hadn't used the thing in the first place! Have other readers had similar problems with head-cleaning cassettes?

Richard Criscione  
Fredonia, N.Y.

**A** "I thought a routine cleaning wouldn't hurt"—those words have been uttered by many other readers who have had similar experiences with head-cleaning cassettes. Some have written to me, mostly to condemn the products, which often have led them into expensive and unnecessary VCR repairs.

As longtime readers of this column are likely aware, I'm not unequivocally opposed to these products. They serve their purpose when the need for genuine head cleaning arises. In an emergency I've even used them myself, both the wet and dry varieties. Nowadays many video dealers routinely suggest buying a head-cleaning cassette whenever someone buys a new VCR. What with rampant VCR discounting, they often make more money selling this ubiquitous accessory than on the machine itself.

I don't begrudge them the few extra dollars of profit that selling head cleaners can bring. In fact, it's a good idea to have one around for those rare but inevitable occasions when you need one. But the problem is that dealers and manufacturers alike overemphasize their use. And why not? The faster you use one up, the quicker you will need to replace it with a new one.

Just because you've got one doesn't mean you need to use it. When a video head becomes clogged, you'll know it. Any use of a head cleaning cassette before that time is risky, rather than preventive maintenance. A lot of VCR owners who have these gadgets would be better off if they regarded them more like fire-extinguishers—something to be used only in an emergency. 





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O N D E R

# People

## Idol Chatter

by **Lorenzo Carcaterra**



Looks like we won't be seeing **Eddie Murphy** in *Beverly Hills Cop* after January, when Paramount will pull it. Murphy has such a good time

working in front of the cameras that he considers what he's done in *Trading Places*, 48 *HRS*, and *Best Defense* (all three on video) as well as in *Cop* nothing more than fun. "I'm not an actor," Murphy says. "I'm an entertainer and a comedian. I'm not impressed with the whole acting groove. It doesn't blow my mind to be an actor. The

whole respect thing actors get is bull. I'm a liar. That's all acting is—lying. You turn the cameras on and I can make tears run down my cheeks and make the audience believe me. I can tell a good lie. Lying is cool. It's fun." So's *Beverly Hills Cop*.

**Carl Weathers** will make his final appearance as boxer **Apollo Creed** this month when *Rocky IV* opens in theaters across the country (you can catch him on video in the first three *Rockys* as well as in a low-budget but well-made war movie, *Force 10 from Navarone*). His remake of the **Sidney Poitier**/**Tony Curtis** 1957 feature, *The Defiant Ones*, is also in the can and will air on ABC this month, then make a quick spin to video. **Robert Urich** costars. "Audiences are different in 1985 than they were back then," he says. "Then, the racial issue was shocking. I've added a lot of action but retained the part about the two men, one black, the other white, who

hate each other but are chained together. After all, you can't change everything." Good point.

*Prizzi's Honor*, **John Huston**'s black comedy about a Mob soldier who marries a hitwoman, hits video racks this month and its star, **Jack Nicholson**, couldn't be happier with the end results. "I wanted to do something different," Mr. Jack says. "Before going into the movie I was terrified. I turned down *The Godfather* because I thought you had to be Italian. Usually I go in asking a lot of questions trying to find out about the character. But in this one, I came in saying, 'I don't know.' I think it's one of the best things I've ever done." Better than *The Pit and the Pendulum*?

**Bruce Dern** has played every psycho in the book (check out *Black Sunday* if you don't believe me), but always wanted a crack at a normal guy. Well, in *Toughlove* he got one. The movie, which aired on ABC last month and goes to video this month, is about two parents (**Lee Remick** is Mom) coping with their troubled teenagers. "This is one of the few times I've played a character with a wife, and one of the rare occasions when I've been given a triple-digit IQ," Dern says. "It's great to play a responsible human being. Really, it's great." OK Bruce, stay calm, big guy.

**Steve Tesich**, who wrote the script for *Breaking Away* and won an Academy Award for his tale of an obsessed young bike rider, returns to familiar terrain with *American Flyers* (on video). This time he's written about his own days as a competitive bicyc-

ler living in the American West. "To me," says Tesich, who also wrote *Eyewitness* and *Four Friends*, "screenplays are images which usually come to me as daydreams and I write them down. They are really Polaroids from my brain, nothing more than memories." I see.

**Stevie Wonder** is back in a big way with a new album *In Square Circle* and an Oscar from last year's theme song for *The Woman in Red*. And there's still the big-selling album and video made from his (and 47 other singers') contribution to USA for Africa and *We Are the World*. Wonder gives a simple reason as to why he agreed to participate in the *We Are the World* collection. "It gave me a chance to see and work with **Ray Charles**," he joked. "We both just sort of bumped into each other."

That's **Tony Curtis** you'll be seeing this month when his latest movie *Mafia Princess* bows on both television and in video stores. The story of mobster **Sam Giancana** and his daughter **Antoinette** (**Susan Lucci**) is a big break for the actor, fresh off another bout with booze and drugs. "I was living in the depths of depravity," he says. "But now I'm back and I'm ready."

Did you know that **Maryjane**, a thankfully rare 1968 feature which stars **Fabian**, was cowritten by **Peter Marshall**, one-time host of *The Hollywood Squares*? The film—fresh on video, though don't expect it to be in every store—carries this appealing tag line: "Maryjane, not the girl next door, but a trip to hell." Heavy stuff, Peter.





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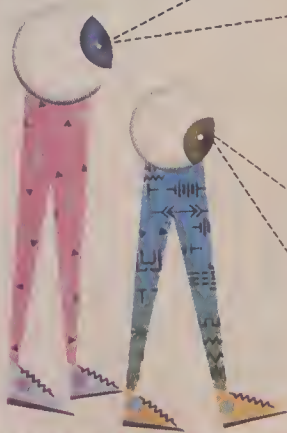
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## People

Jennifer Beals did not do most of the dancing in *Flashdance*. She did do most of the acting in *The Bride* (on video this month). The critics tore her apart, audiences stayed away, and Jennifer headed back to school at Yale. She has, however, a number of reasons for her poor onscreen performance. "They edited out big chunks of my character's development," she says. "All these little things I did to have her change are smoothed out now. The script I agreed to do is not the film that's up onscreen." I would hate to have seen *that* script.

Wallace Shawn is starting to make a career of walking away with someone else's picture. His latest theft is in *Micki & Maude*, the Dudley Moore feature of a few months back that has been doing very well as a video. Putting his arms around a fat nurse and mouthing off lines like "I worship your body like a French cathedral" have helped put Shawn on the comedy map. "I like being somebody's lover," he says. "I frequently play roles in which I'm so isolated and weird that it goes without saying that such a person wouldn't have a lover. Most of the roles I'm offered are small. I don't know why. I'm available for gigantic ones." Keep stealing, Wally, but don't get greedy.

Dustin Hoffman, still collecting video wealth thanks to *Tootsie*, will also enjoy huge video sales when *Death of a Salesman* goes that route shortly after Christmas. Meanwhile, there's talk that the actor will remake *Kind Hearts and Coronets*.

Blue Eyes for Christmas? Frank Sinatra in your living-room? Well, that's the idea when *The Best of Everything* finds its way into video stores between Christmas and New Year's week. The 70-minute home video features Frank singing "Teach Me Tonight," "Mack the Knife," "Stormy Weather," and more. There will also be footage of Frank meeting Michael Jackson. All this from MGM/UA for \$39.95.

Michael Moriarty, on video in both *Pale Rider* (which stars that tall guy with the beard) and *Troll* (which costars a troll), is said to be in line for the next Eastwood feature, probably an urban police drama... Al Pacino is being talked about as Michael Corleone again. Plans are underway for *Godfather III* to begin shooting in the spring... *Welcome to Frankie Say Bang* is a 62-minute tape of Frankie Goes to Hollywood. The longform video is slowly sneaking its way Stateside and should be in a number of stores by the end of the year... James Woods, Jim Belushi, and Michael Pare have just finished filming *Salvador* down in—well, guess. Anyway, the film was written by Oliver Stone and if you think this man doesn't like violence, you should rent *Scarface* and *Year of the Dragon*. Or maybe you shouldn't. Trust me... Have you rented *Godzilla 1985* yet? It's a great gift for someone you like or even don't like. Raymond Burr costars. *Godzilla* stars. ✓



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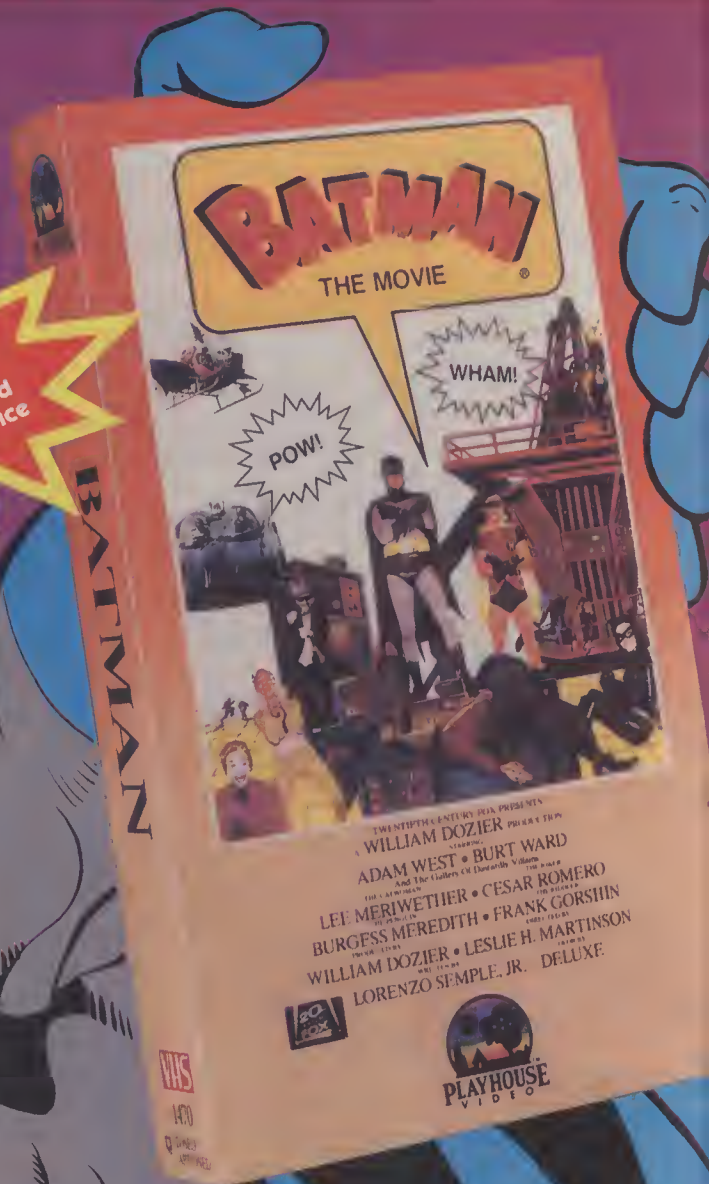
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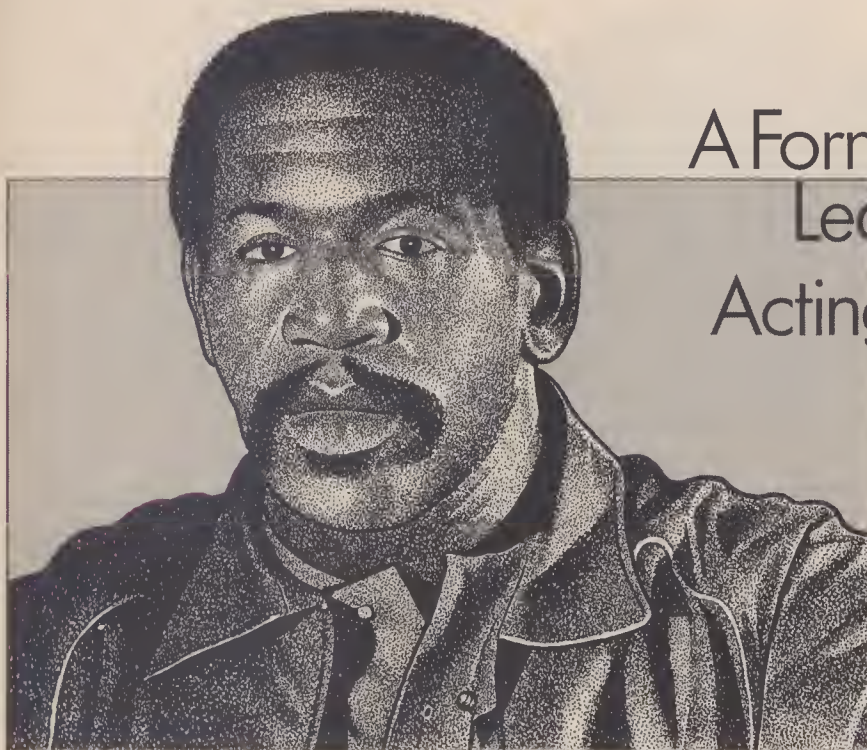
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# Bubba Till You Burst



A Former Grid Star  
Leaps From  
Acting into Video

By Hilary  
Evans

**N**obody with a brain is likely to argue with Bubba Smith, the former football hero-turned-actor. Apart from the fact that the man is 6 foot 8 inches tall and weighs in at 247 pounds, Smith survived 20 seasons in the NFL, playing for the Houston Oilers, Oakland Raiders, and Baltimore Colts. He was also runner up for the prestigious Heisman Trophy in 1966. Bubba knows about keeping fit. But does he know enough to make an exercise video—especially when shelves in video stores are stacked with more of them than you can shake a jock at?

According to Smith, there's room for improvement. "I saw the videos made by other people," he recalls in a soft, low-key voice surprising from a man of his stature. "I don't think

people want to lift objects as is in Lyle Alzado's tape. I don't call Arnold Schwarzenegger's an exercise video. And I thought Bruce and Linda Jenner's video was like a Ken and Barbie tape." Not even Jane Fonda's best-selling workout escaped Smith's critical eye. "It's inconceivable to me that she doesn't sweat," he grins.

So what does Smith feel he has to offer in his *Bubba, Until It Hurts* video (from Continental Video, \$39.95)? Along with his athletic expertise, Smith believes he's giving exercisers "reality." The other videos are just too perfect: Nobody in them sweats, nobody makes mistakes, nobody looks like he's in pain or has trouble doing the exercises to the maximum limit. This is not reality. These perfect, demanding

tapes probably turn most people off to working out altogether. "I can see where a lot of guys would get intimidated by Jane," Smith speculates. "Here they are at the second exercise, sweaty and about to die, and she's saying 'We're going to stretch this leg all the way over here.' Not everyone's going to be able to stretch like Jane. I tell people, 'Just keep doing it. You'll get a little further as you go.' That's what makes this tape special from all the others."

Smith's program *does* look do-able and fun. His team of fellow exercisers look as though they're actually doing the whole routine—for real. In contrast to Smith's team, which gets shinier and shinier, most video athletes seem to be patted down at regular intervals. "I didn't want to do that on our tape," says

Smith. "That's why we did our program straight through." The sweat literally flies. His regimen of Motion Resistance Isometrics is tough. No doubt about it. The first half of the 88-minute tape demonstrates each exercise at a gentle pace and explains what it's good for. The second half is brisk, non-stop repeat of part one. Smith advises beginners to do the first part for three weeks before trying the advanced course.

Practicing what he teaches, Smith does these isometrics for two-and-a-half hours each day. Tack on some 360 situps. Every other day, he spends an equal amount of time at a Los Angeles gym. He also watches his diet, eating only fruit after 6 p.m. Football fans used to the 300-plus pound Smith of his Colts days may gaze in



astonished wonder at the svelte model gliding gracefully on the tape. Smith is weight conscious today because of his current acting career. "If I gain weight, the roles I get as an actor change. They used to call me 'The Thug of the Month,'" Smith laughs.

In an effort to demonstrate that anyone regardless of age or ability can enjoy his video, Smith put together a team of five women and three men of varying ages and professions to work out with him. The team consists of actresses, models, a commercial actor, former Buffalo Bills player Alan Collins, and Vince Cannon, manager of actress Dyan Cannon. "All the women, with the exception of one, are over 30," Smith says proudly. "One guy is 48 and I'm 40!"

Though he was convinced *Bubba* would fill a gap in the already crowded exercise video market, Smith couldn't find anybody willing to finance production of the video. "Everybody was saying the market is saturated. I said, 'No, it's not.'" Undeterred, Smith provided the \$127,000 necessary to produce *Bubba*. "Every penny came out of my own pocket," Smith admits. "I don't care whether I lose the money or not. What was important to me was that I wanted something that was real." As executive producer, Smith left the details to producers Gary Kleinman and Tody Smith (his brother and agent). He did have definite ideas about what he wanted for his production, however, including having Dennis Matkosky (cowriter of *Flashdance*'s "Maniac") compose an original soundtrack—a first in exercise video history.

Smith wanted the energy to bounce off each team member captured on tape, and he wanted each person to get a share of the spotlight. "Looking at other tapes, I would see everybody in the background, all faded," he says slightly amazed. "My ego isn't that big. Why are they all there if they're not going to be used? I didn't want it to be, 'You gotta exercise every morning with Bubba.' You can choose anybody on that tape you want to exercise with."

Smith's desire for reality meant leaving in a bit of human imperfection. Groans and grimaces, huffs and puffs from the team (and Bubba) were not edited out. Little mistakes are visible. "A lot of times we got awkward," says Smith sounding like a producer. "I wanted that to stay in because a lot of people doing the exercises at home are going to be awkward. A lot of them are going to be delirious. At one point I got delirious and I left that in." All modesty aside, Smith for the most part carries out his isometrics with grace, ease, and some kidding around. "The worst thing that can happen is for somebody not to have fun while they're working out. We were laughing," Smith points out. "Everybody was talking and having fun. You could see it on their faces. We were tired when we got through but we had fun."

As proof of his faith in *Bubba*, Smith went on the promotional trail just prior to

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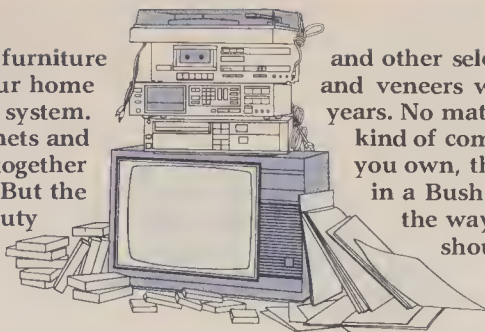


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the video's release late last summer, talking not only to the media but meeting with video distributors themselves. "I think that's another first," he notes with satisfaction. "Evidentially people with videos don't do that. The distributors seemed to appreciate it. I tried to make their sale a lot easier and help them understand the energies I put into the tape. I told them, 'Most people don't have to put up their money to make a video. It's my money, so I'm out here hustling.'" But being on the business end once was enough. "All that paper work," he laughs.

Acting is enough. Since injuries put a stop to his football days, Smith has carved out a nice little career for himself in show business. He's had roles in the highly successful *Police Academy* and *Police Academy II*, in the television series *Blue Thunder* and *Half Nelson*, as well as guest spots on the series *Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer*, *Bloopers*, *Blunders* and *Practical*

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Jokes and, not surprisingly, a recent *Battle of the Network Stars*. Not forgetting, of course, those famous Miller Lite commercials. More movies are coming up, including *Police Academy III*, a film with football pal Dick Butkus, and a possible Smith production (with brother Tody and Kleinman) to be made in Australia. Smith likes the challenge of acting. "It gets the adrenaline pumping. That's what I had in football."

What kind of actor is Bubba Smith? Let's be blunt. He's obviously no Brando. The parts he's attracted seem to be more in tune with his off-screen persona. *Police Academy* was a film that might very well qualify as a Harvard Lampoon candidate for worst movie of the year. An amateurish send-up of rookie patrolmen (and women), Bubba played a cranky cop candidate who had trouble coping with the system. He's bounced from the academy when he loses his cool (the racism, at least, was more real than the rest of the movie), but he's vindicated when he foils a crazy during a riot-looting scene.

Smith has few lines in *Police Academy* (who said ex-football players had to be linguistically adept?) but he does have more screen presence than the rest of the sorry cast. He's passable, and will probably achieve a level equaling or exceeding Jimmy Brown.

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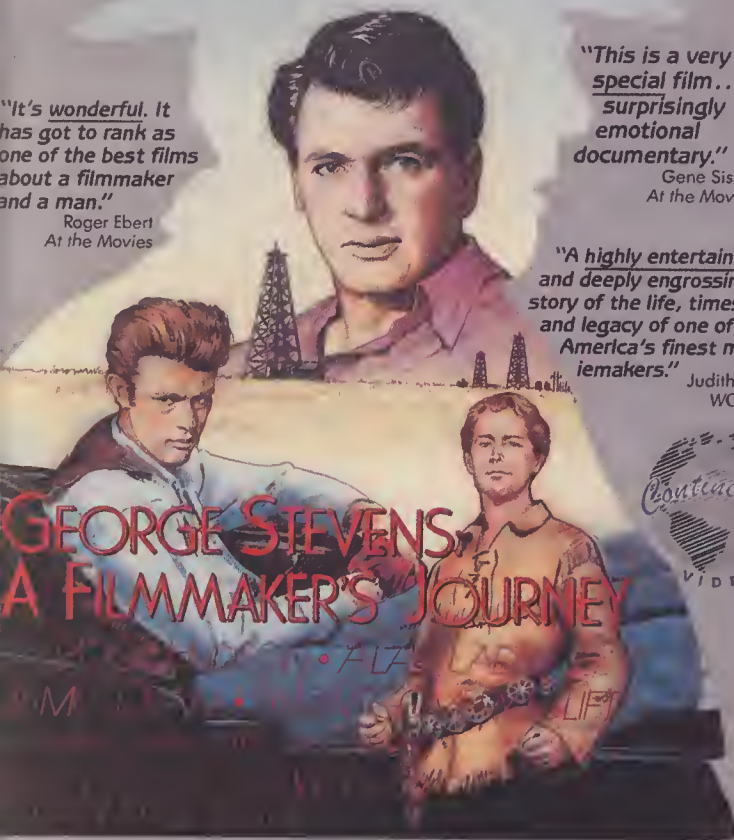
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AT THE MOVIES



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**AGUIRRE-  
WRATH OF GOD**



# Videogram

## The Electronic Intelligencer

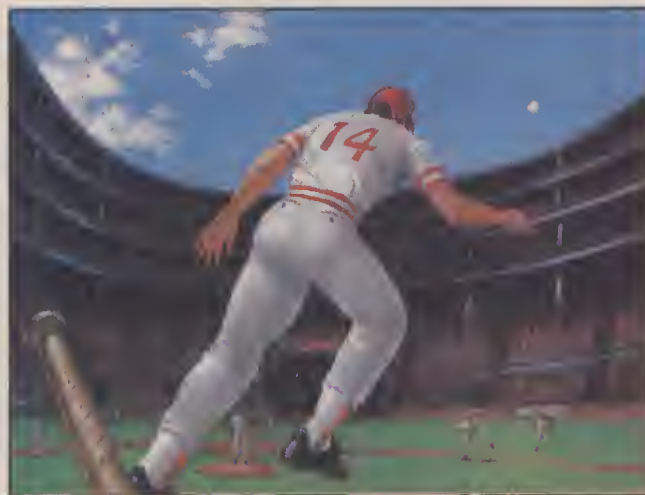
**Edited by  
Ben Templin**

### The Incredible Shrinking Camera

Baseball fans can look forward to seeing their games from a totally new perspective next season. ABC Sports' new camera is small enough to mount on an umpire's face mask. It puts the viewer right behind the plate as a ball is hit. Conceived last April, the microcam was successfully tested at the World Little League Playoffs in August. "It's the first time we actually put a camera onto the field without affecting visibility or the game structure itself," says ABC Sports Vice President Dennis Lewin.

To test the four-ounce wonder ABC brought Little League umpire Frank Rizzo to New York to see if the camera would affect him during play. A five-foot long wire ran from the camera to a seven-pound microwave transmitter on his waist. The 75 year-old ump went through a series of calls—including ripping the mask off his face for a clear look at a slide into home—without having it affect his action. The camera uses a Hitachi MOS chip and circuitry. A microphone is attached to the belt pack.

ABC feared that the habit many umpires have of shaking their heads up and down would cause viewers to get dizzy. Rizzo didn't do that, but he unexpectedly panned infield plays. Some of the shots the camera caught were replays of other infield action and foul bunts with the pitcher diving toward the umpire. While there was talk of using the camera to second guess the umpire and



check his calls for accuracy, Little League spokesman Jim Hughes says it was dismissed because the camera is mounted about six inches above eye level.

Lewin admits the microcam's resolution is marginally lower than that of the larger television cameras. The day of the Little League championship game was overcast, and it began to rain at the bottom of the third inning. The microcam's picture was initially on the grainy side, but a change of filters (which took 30 seconds) allowed a broadcast quality picture.

The broadcasting arm of the Baseball Commissioner's office isn't yet endorsing the camera. Some old timers are worried that it will interfere with the play of the game. ABC chose the Little League to field test the device because of its history of working with innovations (aluminum bats, chest protectors, a full batter's cap covering the ears and back of the head) before they are adapted for minor and major league play.

As for other applications Lewin says, "It would be terrific to have a shot from a football helmet while a player looks for a hole in the line,

but that's impractical for a contact sport now." Of course, Lewin admits that if someone had speculated about the microcam 10 years ago, he would have "laughed him out the door." He expects that miniature cameras for football helmets will probably work some day.

### They Have The Look

The other day I saw a 13-year-old girl dressed in a black miniskirt, white lace shirt, and about 15 strands of fake pearls. There was something multi-media about the look, a cross between a Madonna video and a *Vogue* magazine spread. It's no acci-

dent that the release of *Annie Hall* in the 70's started a craze in the fashion industry for oversized jackets and ties for women either. Now the fashion mighties are getting wise to the power of video and film imagery to sell their wares. The fashion video, a music video with flashy clothes, is being used as a marketing tool by some of the biggest names in fashion—Norma Kamali, Pierre Cardin and Daniel Hechter, to name a few.

But Kamali, more than anyone, is capitalizing on the music video. Kamali has created a personality beneath the clothes—a sort of fashion Madonna. In the past year Kamali has made six videos, but with *Interview*, a 28-minute tape starring model Audrey Matson, the designer has added a story line. Audrey Matson takes us into a series of sessions with her psychiatrist. We learn about the Kamali woman. She's indecisive, can't seem to do anything right, and doesn't know what life is all about. While she tries to figure it out we find out that brass accessories are in, that fake leopard trim on black gloves and over pumps looks great, and that floppy felt hats with bold ornaments are part of



*Chic meets shrink in Norma Kamali's fashion video Interview.*



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The Look the Kamali woman loves and wants.

The plot is set to Carly Simon's new Epic label album, "Spoiled Girl," and you can be sure this girl is spoiled rotten. Carly Simon's lyrics sound as superficial as the story line, though Kamali's idea that it takes more than a runway model to sell clothing is on the money.

The tape was made in record time—two days filming, two days to edit, and \$100,000 to produce. That's almost top dollar in the fashion video business, where budgets can run from \$20,000 to \$200,000. *Interview* was produced inside New York City's Palladium disco, where Francesco Clemente's mural and Kenny Scharf's psychedelic recroom were used as sets. The tape is shown 24 hours a day at the Norma Kamali store on East 56th Street and is being released to department store boutiques as well. As if that isn't enough exposure, Kamali is considering whether MTV will pick it up from Epic records to be shown as a bona fide music video. If it does it will probably go down in MTV history as one of the cheapest music videos to date. After all, Carly Simon didn't even show up for a rehearsal. —Julia Lisella

## Film Fest Video Feast

The American Film Festival is letting video productions compete in all of its 1986 film categories. Video was previously judged separate from 16mm film productions and did not have as many categories to compete in. AFF director Sandy Mandelberger says he hopes this will encourage more entries that are aimed at the home video market. The Festival has had a decidedly institutional focus in the past.

Some of the categories open for submission are Short Takes, Arts & Humanities, and Science. A special video category will be retained to "celebrate the uniqueness of the medium." The video competition will include Video Art, Video Reportage, Video Verite, How-To's, and Music Videos.

The entry deadline is Janu-

ary 15, 1986. Entry forms are available by writing: The American Film Festival, 45 John St., New York, NY 10038.

## Sneaky Previews

If you want a truly blank videocassette, you may have to erase it after buying the tape. 3M is adding movie previews to its Scotch EXG line of blank tapes. Dubbed Freeviews, 3M has enlisted major home video publishers to provide the trailers for the tapes. The initial cassette will include spots from *Friday the 13th, Part 5*, *Mad Max*, *The Compleat Beatles*, and *How to Shoot Videos*. The spots will be changed quarterly. The EXG still costs \$9.95. Neither the video publishers nor 3M are exchanging money for the spots. All they get is exposure.

## Last Gasp

Rumors of RKO Home Video's death are exaggerated. While not quite ready to give RKO an R.I.P., operations for the consumer video arm of RKO Pictures have been cut back significantly. Monthly releases have halted, though titles already out on video will still be available in bookstores.

While most of its better titles, like *Sweeney Todd* and

*Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music* will still be available, RKO won't be expanding its list of videos from RKO Radio Pictures films of the '30s and '40s. RKO representatives say many of the titles (like *King Kong* and *Citizen Kane*) have already been on television or are in the public domain, and RKO did not find the market profitable.

One of the more obscure titles still available is *Five Came Back*—a predecessor of the airport disaster films—with Lucille Ball from a screenplay by Nathaniel West.


## Upwardly Mobile Cameras

Cameramen wishing to ascend the ranks of the Washington, D.C. press corps are doing so literally these days. Photographers and independent television crewmen now use ladders—the newest video aid—to get shots of the President during White House events. A good photo or film clip from a freelance photographer can now depend more on the height of his ladder than the quality of camera.

The step up for some photographers started modestly. One or two foot ladders were used to get a better view be-

cause network television cameras blocked ground level shots. However, the competitive nature of the work quickly escalated the ladders to four, six, and even eight foot heights.

With the top growing overcrowded, some photographers are rising to the challenge by remaining grounded, aiming their lenses through the steps of the ladders while colleagues fight for space above. Will ladders remain a necessary accessory for independent photojournalists?

The question is still up in the air. 



## Vidbits

### Smuggling Vice—

Seems that the television undercover agents of *Miami Vice* are involved in smuggling. The videocassette of the two-hour pilot for the popular detective show isn't marketed in the U.S., but domestic outlets are picking up the tape from Canadian dealers and quietly doing a brisk under-the-counter business. MCA Home Video-Canada distributes the tape for \$74.95, Canadian.

### Open Classroom—

With the end of the school semester nearing many New Yorkers are finding the drug dealers aren't the only reason to stay out of Greenwich Village's Washington Square Park. New York University video students are going on a shooting spree now that projects

are due. "They got me on tape and didn't even give me a quarter," said one miffed street juggler as he packed up his batons.

### Rambo for Aussies—

*Rambo* mania is contagious. It's already spread to Adelaide, South Australia. Youths have been spotted wearing jungle greens, blackened faces, and armed with guns and machetes. Tourists have been stalked and one kangaroo was beheaded.

**Hold the Starch—**"Just press the suit, put extra starch in the shirts, and give me a Beta version of *Police Academy*." Tape clubs are popping up even at drycleaners these days. Manhattan's C-Vue cleaners offers a free tape with every \$10 worth of laundry, which

proves you don't have to get taken to the cleaners when you join a club.

### Videogramtest #1:

**Description.** The black-based front-loading Proptronics VHS VCR measures 18-1/2 by 4-1/2 by 10-3/16 inches (w/h/d) and weighs three pounds. Its control panel sports standard functions plus separate buttons for frame-by-frame search, and camera rewind. A digital LED display painted in the upper righthand corner freezes the time at 10:45. The unit comes from Proptronics of Northbrook, Ill. Price: \$42.00.

**Operation.** It doesn't. Its sole purpose is as a prop to place in furniture stores.

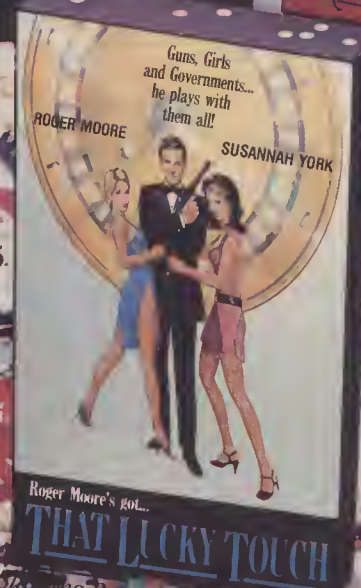
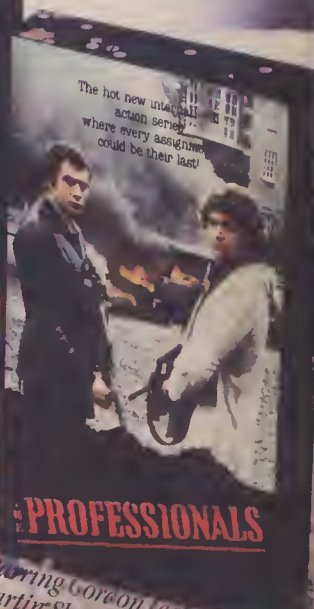
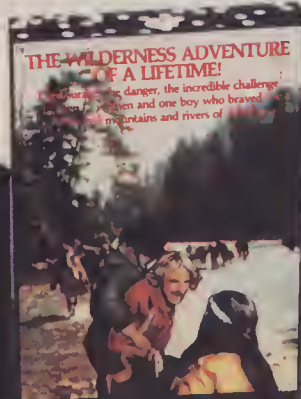
**Conclusion.** Perfect as a budget status symbol for overextended yuppies.



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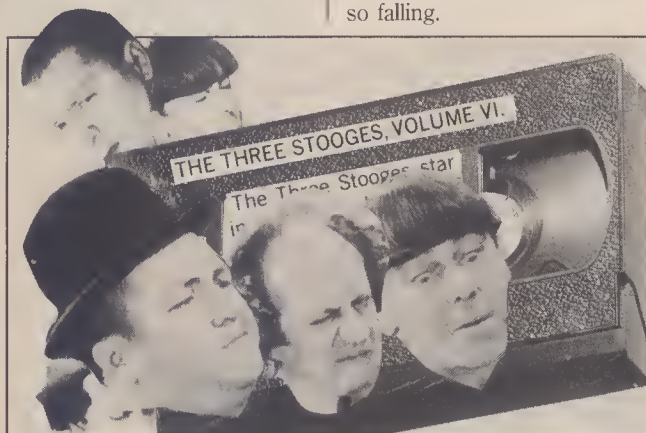


# TV Den

## Techniques and Technology

### Lord of The Labels

by Roderick Woodcock



New technology has a way of sneaking up on us, so while I've been busy over the past half-decade cataloguing VCRs and cameras, the price of plain-paper copiers—invented by Xerox and often generically (and incorrectly) referred to as such—was also falling.

Something drastic had to be done, and I did it. About a year ago I heeded Jack Klugman's advice and bought one of those small desktop Canon copiers. I went the deluxe route, and while the discounted prices of the simplest models start about \$500 (for the no-frills PC-10) I went whole-hog and blew a cool grand (actually \$989 plus tax) on the more versatile PC-25, which offers automatic paper feed, a 120-percent enlargement feature, two reduction ratios (67 and 78 percent) and an optional "directional reduction" lens that can squeeze or stretch oversize originals so they'll fit onto regular letter or legal-size paper.

My new copier does everything it was advertised to do and then some—it has given me a fascinating new way to label the cassettes in my videotape collection!

The copier, you see, doesn't work with just regular sizes of paper. The smallest piece you can use, for example, is about the size of a business card—2 by 3-1/2 inches.

Labels, of course, aren't much good unless they're adhesive. No problem. Most stationery stores carry an extensive line of copier-approved adhesive-backed paper and labels. One example is Avery's #5455 8-1/2 by 11 inch sheets—20 sheets to a package for about \$7.

With my own copier, a supply of adhesive paper, and a source of original (or borrowed) artwork, I was on my way. In the old days, for example, my collection of Three Stooges tapes (just the Curlys—no Shemps thank you!) were labeled with simple but neat hand-drawn letters. Now I was able to make a much more professional-looking label by spending a few minutes with some pressure-sensitive letters (Letraset is one well-known brand) and copying the rest on the Canon.

First I measured the dimensions for the spine area of the cassette. Then I made sure the artwork would fit inside. Next I drew a series of spine-sized rectangles on a sheet of paper as a guide for cutting them up later. I made about eight copies of my original artwork, cut them out carefully, and glued them inside the rectangles, making sure they lined up.

Finally I placed this original artwork on the glass copy-board of the machine and made one or two test copies on regular paper to see how it would look. Like all copiers, this one has an exposure control and it's a good idea to

make a few tests so that the shadow of the "cutlines" on your originals doesn't show on the copies. Once I got the right setting, it was a simple task to slip in sheets of adhesive paper so I could start minting—er, printing my customized cassette labels. A few scissors snips and the labels were ready to go onto the tapes. Perfectionists may eschew the scissors and use a paper cutter or X-Acto knife and metal ruler instead to get a perfectly straight edge on their labels.

Attractive spine labels aren't the only thing you can make. After a while it occurred to me that I could copy TV listing blurbs and stick them onto the top of the cassette or on the slipcase.

Folks who compile tapes of commercials, news clips, or other short video bits can use a copier to make customized index cards filled in with information about the date, source, and length of the item. These cards are then tucked away along with the cassette in the slipcase, so you can add information as the cassette fills up.

One of my best label-making ideas came when I stayed in a hotel recently and noticed that the remote control for the TV had a label indicating the stations on each channel. What a great idea, I thought. As soon as I got home I started copying and reducing the page in my cable guide. I had to reduce it a couple of times to get it down to a size that would fit onto the back of my (several) remote controls, but all the information was still readable. Why, someone could even start a small business making up these labels and selling them for a few dollars.



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# Random Access

Personal Computers, News, and Games

## Tapes By The Byteloader

How many times have you accidentally taped over part of a television program you wanted to save? If you're like the rest of us, plenty. That's why *VideoFile*, a timeshifting database for the Commodore 64, the Apple II series, and IBM PCs is a great idea. The program catalogs your collection while a built-in calculator translates counter readings into hours and minutes.

Let's say you want to tape "A Stumble Through the 20th Century with Bill Moyers" on the cassette containing your mate's recording of "Julia Child Cooks Burnt Toast." In the interest of domestic bliss, you want to save the recipe for later holiday festivities. *VideoFile* makes it easy to see if you have space on the tape. Enter the length in hours and minutes of the program you want to record, and *VideoFile* will list all options. The first choice will be any tapes that have space at the beginning of a cassette, then other spaces within, then space that is almost enough, then too much, or none at all.

*VideoFile* provides three ways to list tapes. However, once you define the categories, that's it. They can't be changed, so take care to include a miscellaneous category to hold all those undefinable programs you may tape. You can list shows according to categories (movies, TV programs), alphabetically, or by length. You can also view the contents of a particular tape or list only the programs you want to save or record over. A printer option allows you to make a hardcopy version of your collection.

*VideoFile* takes into account counter mechanisms that track the revolutions of



the VCR's feeding hub or takeup hub. The most complicated thing about using *VideoFile* is determining your machine's hub type. For feeder hubs, the numbers are slow in the beginning and fast at the end. Vice versa for the takeup hubs. Bob Claster, who programmed and sells the database, says he has tested the counter calculation for 15 different machines and found it "dead on for each one."

Another fine feature is the use *VideoFile* makes of function keys. You can make one key stand for a string of characters—a programming concept known as macros. This cuts down on typing and the possibility of typos. You don't have to type common time increments for your favorite programs over and over. Just define a function key using the menu option. Push the appropriate function key when organizing your files, and the entry is found with only one keystroke.

A demonstration disk of *VideoFile* is available for \$10, deductible from the purchase price of \$49.95 (\$59.95 for the IBM version), from

VideoFile, Box 480210, Los Angeles, CA 90048.

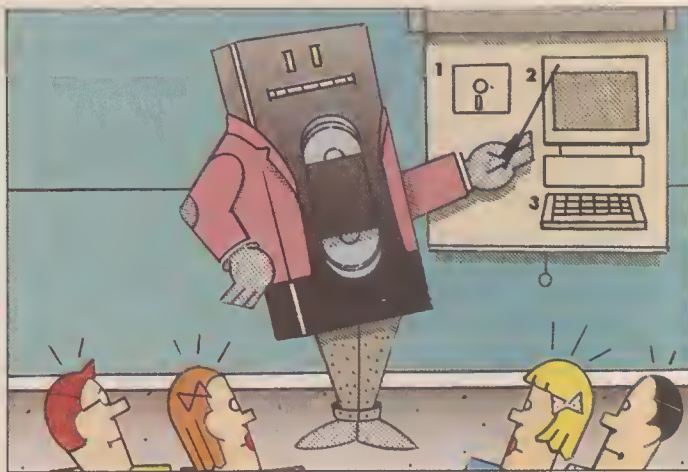
## Lotus 4-5-6-7-8

Most computer users don't find working with Lotus 1-2-3 as simple as A-B-C. But Arthur Young Business Systems has made the bestselling spreadsheet easier to learn with two instructional video packages for high end users. Aimed at companies that need to train lots of computer workers fast, the primer, *Arthur Young's Lotus 1-2-3 Self-Teaching Video Course*, starts with the basics of turning on a computer and

setting up the program. Young's latest video in this series, *Advanced Macro Functions*, explores the more difficult and powerful routines.

The video courses assume no prior knowledge and both come with manuals and example disks (the Lotus program is not included). Students should have an IBM PC or compatible on hand to get the best benefit from these videos. The primer has two two-hour tapes, and *Advanced Macro Functions* includes three two-hour cassettes. The tape quickly points out the limitations of the program and the dangers of losing data during certain functions, like copying routines.

*Advanced Macro Functions* is a real plus for spreadsheet users. If you only learn how to set up the complicated command structure from the video, you'll save a lot of time in typing alone. The package comes with a disk containing 350 macros ready to transfer to your own spreadsheet. These include such useful functions as "type," which lets you define frequently used text for access with only one keystroke and "hide," which lets you





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add comments to the spreadsheet without messing up columns of numbers.

It's obvious that few second takes were shot in producing these videos. The instructor makes typos and backtracks to show us through his own absentmindedness how and why mistakes are made. It's heartening to learn that even really knowledgeable people are prone to error. It makes what is often perceived as a cold medium more personable.

The benefit of using a video is that you can see what jargon like "synchronizing windows with a vertical split" will actually accomplish. To have a visual example is infinitely better than trying to learn the routines and functions by flipping through a cryptic manual.

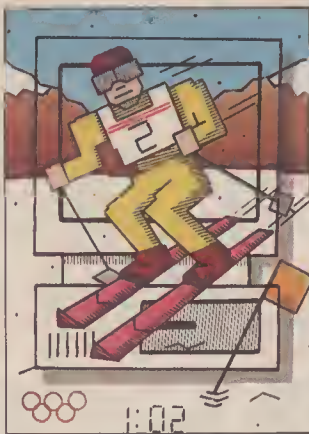
Not that the video is entirely painless, mind you. Spreadsheets just don't have the entertainment value of text adventures and shoot-'em-ups. Even with a price tag of \$399 for each package, the cost-benefit of going through the course is definitely on the side of the video. Both courses are available in Beta and VHS; 3/4-inch U-matic can be had for \$549.

## Sarajevo Sequel

*Winter Games* brings microcomputer games closer to real images than they ever have been. The block graphics still seen on some games are primitive compared to the fluid animation of this Olympian contest.

The true-to-life animation was achieved by the use of video-digitized images—a process that involves converting an analog video signal into a form understandable by the computer. The animation of the athletes in Epyx's *Winter Games*'s seven Olympic events (ski jumping, bobsledding, figure and freestyle skating, "hotdogging," speed skating and the biathlon) was developed using videotaped footage of the Sarajevo Winter Games. Selected frames from the footage, along with still photos, were used by artists to simulate the responsive motion seen onscreen.

The result is spectacular



graphics and animation, even surpassing Epyx's fine but undigitized Olympic predecessors, *Summer Games* and *Summer Games II*. However, while the game play in all three is unique, it's only fun the first time around. Usually no more than a sequence of joystick twitches and wiggles is needed to coordinate the actions of the Olympians—a novelty that wears off quickly.

The graphics and impressive soundtrack make up for the game's repetitive play. The lithe skater is graceful as she turns, leaps, and spins on the rink. You get a sense of the arduous trek the biathlete endures in skiing along a gorgeous chalet-dotted trail. Even the mishaps the athletes encounter (notably the hotdogger's headfirst leap into the snow) are beautiful pieces of computer animation.

The digitized graphics are making a big hit among programmers. They are so pleased with the results that not only is *Winter Games II* a near certainty, but the process of digitizing video of potential game subjects is likely to become "a standard," according to Epyx spokesman Matt Householder.

*Winter Games* is available from Epyx for the Commodore 64, Apple II series, and Macintosh computers with a suggested retail price of \$29 to \$35. —Charles Ardai

## MIDI Mania For The Mac

When *Music Construction Set* appeared two years ago, computer fans were stunned at how it brought the capabilities of Apple's then \$10,000 Lisa to inexpensive, less-powerful models like the

Apple II and Commodore 64.

Now that technology has caught up with the program's essential idea—the ability to create music by moving notes onto an onscreen staff—it has been entirely revamped in a new version for the Macintosh. With *Deluxe Music Construction Set* (\$49.95 from Electronic Arts), would-be composers have the opportunity to build melodies or transcribe from sheet music with professional results.

*Deluxe MCS* takes computer music beyond the basics by offering the ability to score with triplets and quintuplets of notes, use beams, slurs, ties, and other types of notation, add lyrics and guitar chords, and print it all out as typeset quality sheet music. The program handles compositions on up to eight complete staves simultaneously.

Naturally, the music composed with *Deluxe MCS* can be played via the Macintosh's own sound system (on the internal or an external speaker). In addition, it will send

the music data to as many as 16 on-line electronic synthesizers via the interface standard known as MIDI, short for Musical Instrument Digital Interface. MIDI synthesizers, from inexpensive models like Casio's CZ-101 (a \$400 micro-marvel) to the Yamaha DX-7 (the "Cadillac" of MIDI machines and the standard in rock music) play compositions with far better sound than any personal computer can create.

This means that sophisticated computer music systems, previously the domain of research groups with access to mainframe computers, are becoming available to personal computer users with as little as a few hundred dollars to commit to their interest. School orchestras and piano recitals could become things of the past, replaced, perhaps, by a single child with enough curiosity to graft Eddie Van Halen's growling electric guitar to, say, the string section of the New York Philharmonic.

—Tim Onosko

## BEST SELLERS/HOME

1. **Print Shop.** AP, C64, AT. Broderbund.
2. **Newsroom.** AP, IBM. Springboard.
3. **Print Shop Graphics Library 1.** AP, C64, AT. Broderbund.
4. **Print Shop Graphics Library 2.** AP. Broderbund.
5. **Bank Street Writer.** AP, APc, IBM, C64, AT. Broderbund.
6. **Clip Art Vol. 1 for Newsroom.** AP. IBM. Springboard.
7. **Print Master.** IBM, PCjr. Advanced Product Solutions.
8. **Dollars & Sense.** AP, APc, IBM, MAC, TIP. Monogram.
9. **Print Master Art Gallery 1.** IBM. Advanced Product Solutions.
10. **Managing Your Money.** AP, IBM. Mecca.

## BEST SELLERS/RECREATION

1. **Jet.** IBM. Sublogic.
2. **Gato.** AP, IBM, MAC, PCjr. Spectrum Holobyte.
3. **Microsoft Flight Simulator.** IBM, PCjr. Microsoft.
4. **Flight Simulator II.** AP, C64, AT, DG. Sublogic.
5. **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64, AT, TIP. Infocom.
6. **F-15 Strike Eagle.** AP, IBM, C64, AT. Microprose.
7. **Karateka.** AP, C64. Broderbund.
8. **Lode Runner.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64, AT. Broderbund.
9. **Zork I.** AP, IBM, MAC, AT, CP/M, DEC, TIP. Infocom.
10. **King's Quest II.** IBM. Sierra On-Line.

LEGEND: AP = Apple, APc = Apple IIc, APe = Apple IIe, AT = Atari, C64 = Commodore 64, COM = Commodore Pet/CBM, CP/M = 5 1/4" and 8" formats, DEC = DEC Rainbow, DG = Data General, EPS = Epson QX-10, IBM = IBM-PC, MAC = Apple Macintosh, PCjr = IBM PCjr, TIP = Texas Instruments Professional, TRS = TRS-80, VIC = Commodore Vic 20, VTR = Victor 9000, WNG = Wang Personal Computer, ZEN = Zenith 100.

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# Video Bookshelf

by Louis  
Kesten

## FINAL CUT

Dreams and Disaster  
in the Making of  
HEAVEN'S GATE  
by Steven Bach

**Final Cut**  
by Steven Bach  
Morrow, New York, \$19.95.  
**The Making of  
Citizen Kane**

by Robert L. Carringer,  
University of California Press, Berkeley,  
Calif., \$22.50.

In 1940, Orson Welles began work on *Citizen Kane*, one of the most controversial and, ultimately, respected films in Hollywood history. Forty years later Michael Cimino began work on *Heaven's Gate*, an equally controversial but ultimately reviled epic western. These movies are the subjects of two new and fascinating accounts detailing the artistic and political tribulations behind their production.

Steven Bach's *Final Cut: Dreams and Disaster in the Making of Heaven's Gate* reads like a classic black comedy. It has all the ingredients, at first, of a great success story: Michael Cimino, fresh off his Oscar-winning triumph with *The Deer Hunter*, had great ideas for *Heaven's Gate*, not to mention a sympathetic, cooperative production company behind him. Instead, *Final Cut* is a tale of ambition running amok while the people with the power to stop it run for cover. *Heaven's Gate* was an utter fiasco for United Artists, costing the studio \$44 million and leading to its dissolution and acquisition by MGM.

Bach was head of East Coast and European production at UA during the debacle. His decisions, or failure to make decisions, proved a major factor in the degeneration of the project from a promising acquisition to "an unmitigated disaster," in Vincent Canby's words. Bach, however, regards his own role unflinchingly, admitting his failures of nerve and of judgment with admirable candor and fatalist humor. He assigns most of the responsibility to himself, production exec David Field, and UA president Andy Albeck, regarding all three as well-intentioned but misguided. Their Pied Piper, of course, is director Cimino.

Despite Bach's charity as a writer and observer, Cimino's arrogance and egomania are overwhelming. The waste on the set of *Heaven's Gate* was monumental. Cimino thought nothing of spending \$150,000 on a single prop (a period locomotive) or building an expensive irrigation system to grow grass on a battlefield. His demands on the studio and the performers were exhausting. In the end he gave UA an unreleasable five and a half hour film.

Bach spices the main plot with illuminating sidebars about other UA productions, including *Apocalypse Now*, the James Bond series, and *The Right Stuff*. The cast of supporting characters includes Woody Allen, Peter Sellers, and screenwriter William Goldman. He also describes a hilarious executive meeting to discuss acquiring *The Island*, which boils down to its quotient of violence and "wet boobies." Such inside views of the movie industry alone

would make worthwhile reading. The center stage tragedy—Cimino's hubris abetted by the cowardice of Bach, Field, and Albeck—makes *Final Cut* the must-read movie book of the year.

Robert L. Carringer's *The Making of Citizen Kane* offers a counterpoint to the fiasco of *Heaven's Gate*. In many ways, Orson Welles looks like a role model for Michael Cimino, an exacting perfectionist who demands full creative control over his work. Both men achieved unusual control—mainly through sheer force of personality—despite relative inexperience in the industry. *The Making of Citizen Kane* is an absorbing technical study detailing the young Welles' effort to bring *Kane* to the screen.

The most controversial aspect of *Kane* in 1940 was its brash send-up of William Randolph Hearst. Carringer, a prominent film historian, tackles the still-raging controversy over the film's authorship head-on. He credits screenwriter Herman Mankiewicz with the original idea (as a former newspaper reporter, he had first-hand knowledge of the publisher), along with substantial chunks of the plotting and dialogue. Welles is acknowledged for "transforming Kane from a cardboard fictionalization of Hearst into a figure of mystery and epic magnificence."

*Kane* is most famous for stylistic flourishes—the visual wit, the cinematographic fluidity, and its ground-breaking montage sequences—but Carringer states that it is the strongest of Welles' films due to Mankiewicz's structural contributions. *Heaven's Gate*





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## Bookshelf

has been praised for its similar style and beauty, but its muddled, jerry-built structure makes it almost incomprehensible. Bach himself recognizes that *Heaven's Gate* failed not because of Cimino's extravagance, but because "it failed to engage audiences on the most basic and elemental levels of sympathy and compassion."

*Citizen Kane*, on the other hand, is an epic film that engages both these emotions. The ultimate lesson to be learned from these two films—and from these two wise and intriguing books about them—is

the importance of restraint and discipline (not to mention a good, rousing story line) to the filmmaker with vision.

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From the nearly 5000 movies produced during Hollywood's richest decade, Vermilye selects 100 that typify the era's yearning for escapist entertainment. Plot summaries, selected review quotes, complete cast and credits provide an eloquent reminder of a glittering past. (Citadel, Secaucus, N.J., \$9.95.)

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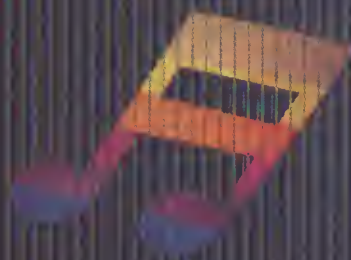
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Some of the eeriest films of the horror genre, produced by Val Lewton in the 40's—*Cat People*, *Isle of the Dead*, *Bedlam*—are perceptively shown as depending less on "visible" monsters than on the dark, repressed side of human experience. (*U. of Illinois Press, Champaign, Ill.* \$18.95.)

### Tony Curtis

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### The Private Cary Grant

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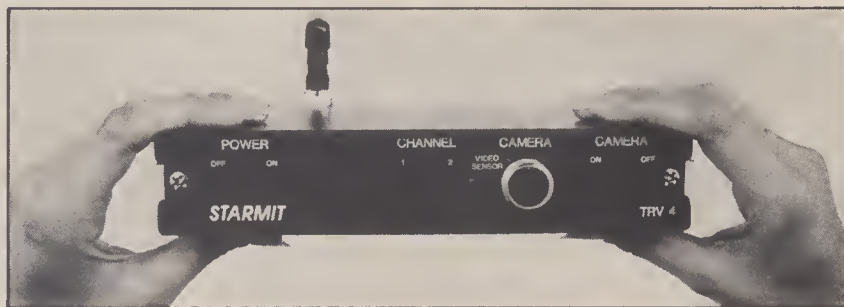
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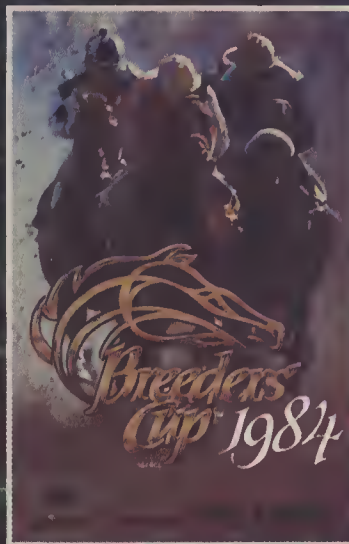
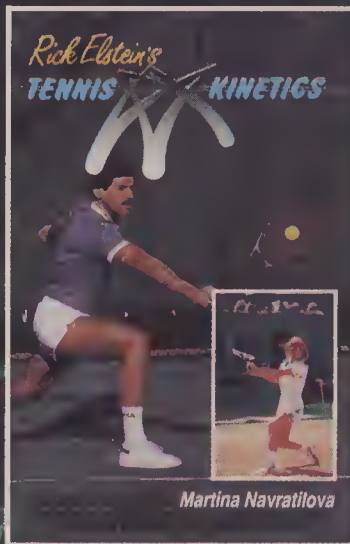
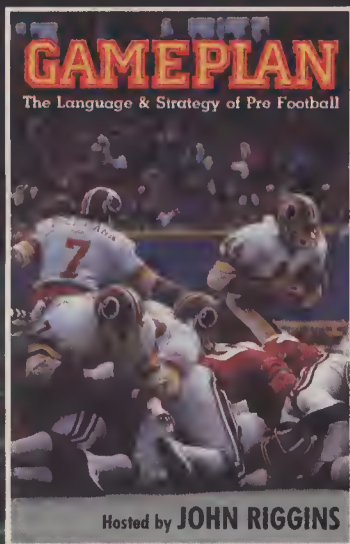
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With embarrassing naivete, Elvis's ex writes about her chaotic 7-year marriage to the rock star, their storybook courtship, platonic (at first) cohabitation, and romantic conjugal bliss mingled with kinky episodes. Disappointment and divorce followed, with Priscilla starting an acting career, which includes her current role as Jenna Wade in *Dallas*. (Putnam, N.Y., \$16.95).

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by Robert Hirschman & Richard Procter

Video enthusiasts will find easy-to-follow rules for successful VCR productions in this manual. Its simple, nontechnical language describes equipment and accessories and provides full data on their use. (Leonard Books, Box 13819, Milwaukee, Wis. 53213, \$7.95.)

### Films For, By And About Women

by Kaye Sullivan

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### Professional Lighting Handbook

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### Movie Comedy Teams

by Leonard Maltin

Surveying a field dominated by a few famous names (Laurel & Hardy, Abbott & Costello, the Marx Bros.), Maltin adds some 20 less celebrated teams—Thelma Todd & Zasu Pitts, Mitchell & Durant, Smith & Dale—whose careers, gags, and routines are documented in hilarious detail in this revised edition. (NAL/Plume, N.Y., \$9.95).

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# Video's Guide to PROGRAMMING

## NEWS & VIEWS

### The Must-Carry Murder Case

Say hello to Hollywood. Say goodbye to offbeat cable shows, minority programming, even some PBS stations. The "must-carry" rule is dead, and the MTVVultures and cable mogul Ted Turner are circling over the carcass.

It's a good bet you've never heard of the deceased: the must-carry rule insured that cable companies had to carry *all* local channels, not just the most profitable. Literally, the rule said that cable systems *must carry* every local broadcast channel, even the one specializing in Korean-language cooking shows. The rule made certain that we got not only our MTV, but our PBS too—along with whatever other minority and alternative shows are broadcast in our areas.

The case of the must-carry murder began when Turner Broadcasting (WTBS, Cable News Network, Headline News) and Quincy (Washington) Cable TV sued the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which issued the must-carry rule in 1966. Turner argued that must-carry violated the First Amendment's freedom-of-speech guarantee and was thus unconstitutional. After all, Turner noted, nobody tells newspapers they *must* publish certain items. In a separate action, MTV Networks Inc. had earlier asked the FCC to waive the must-carry rule in the case of WWHT, a small New Jersey broadcaster which, like MTV, mainly carried music videos.

The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals gave the FCC a chance to rewrite the rule but Chairman Mark Fowler, a zealous deregulator, declined. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) meanwhile petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court for a 30-



Illustrations by Lane Smith

day "stay"—a request to delay eliminating the rule for 30 days so the NBA could prepare a Supreme Court argument—but the Appeals Court refused even this. Finally, the NAB sought a stay from Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren Burger. He too said no. The broadcasters plan to ask for a full Supreme Court ruling but an NBA spokesman says they'll likely have to turn to Congress for help.

Ted Turner's touching concern for the First Amendment is not an attempt to switch from communications czar to constitutional lawyer. He brought the suit for one reason only: to push aside the little guys and get onto more of the sometimes-overcrowded cable systems. Nothing wrong with this in and of itself, of course. But with the death of must-carry, says NAB spokesman Rory Benson, "We have every indication that PBS stations, minority stations, new, independent and

specialized stations are all in danger of being dropped from many cable systems—to be replaced by more profitable pay channels.

One potential victim is WWHT, a Newark, New Jersey station on UHF Channel 68, covering the New York metropolitan area. WWHT broadcasts, among other things, stereo music videos appealing to inner-city audiences—theoretically in competition with the monolithic MTV, except that MTV's whitebread top-40 caters to a much different viewership.

MTV isn't just MTV, of course. It's MTV Networks, Inc., which includes VH1—the Big Chill channel—and Nickelodeon, 24-hour kidvid that MTV Networks aims at "yuppie puppies" (their phrase, not mine). That WWHT is filling a teen funk/rap/R&B void that MTV ignores isn't the problem. MTV Networks targeted WWHT because all those inner-city kids

By Frank Lovece

are sitting in front of TV screens that could be selling designer diapers and other goods to the yuppie puppies in the luxury coops a few blocks away.

Ironical, isn't it? One of cable's shining promises was that it would break the broadcast networks' oligarchic grip and allow localized "narrowcasting" to small audiences. Narrowcasting does exist to some extent in the form of such special-interest cable services as the Weather Channel, C-Span, and the Financial News Network. Yet local narrowcasters and their audiences have just been trumped by cable kings jostling for the same stranglehold ABC, CBS, and NBC have long enjoyed.

A spokesman for the National Cable Television Association (NCTA) maintains that "There's not going to be any wholesale dropping of [broadcast channels]. Cable systems are businesses that are responsive to the needs of their viewerships." The spokesman obviously has never been put on hold for 20 minutes when making a repair call, and then made to wait six days to get his signals back.

## Domain Poisoning

You've seen them in pharmacies, bookstores, and other unlikely outlets, often selling for under \$20. Many are classics—*The Third Man*, *The Lady Vanishes*, *My Man Godfrey*, *The Blue Angel*. Others are (let's be kind) "cult" movies—*Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Blob*, *White Zombie*.

You won't be seeing such good old-fashioned flicks quite so cheaply in the future—though when you do see them, at higher prices, they'll be spiffed up with a new coat of paint. Why? Because many of the movies long thought to be in the "public domain" are turning out to be private property.

Public domain—PD for short—refers to works on which the copyright has lapsed or was never properly affixed. The idea is that after 75 years, anybody who wants to can publish the complete works of Shakespeare or Mark Twain or *The Bible* or *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* without having to pay royalties to the author. Movies, songs,

books—all the same.

Yet until the Copyright Act of 1976, which laid down the 75-year rule, copyrights lasted only 28 years, after which you could reapply for another 28. Lots of movie producers forgot to reapply. Others forgot to apply in the first place. Either way, their movies ended up in the public domain. When video arrived, anybody who wanted to make a buck off PD movies could, and usually did. PD movies are thus the ones we see for \$14.95 or so at the drugstore checkout line. Yet as recent lawsuits, accusations, and counter-charges demonstrate, not all PD is OK.

Take the Orson Welles vehicle *The Third Man*. At one time or another it has been available from Budget, Crown, Sheik, Penguin, Prism, Media Home Entertainment, and Video Dimensions among others. Why not? After all, the movie's copyright had expired.

But the "underlying" copyright—on the Graham Greene short story on which the movie was based—had not. Janus Films, an old and prestigious movie distributor, had craftily obtained the short story's movie rights from London Films, part of the Thorn/EMI conglomerate. Janus also obtained movie rights to John Buchan's novel *The 39 Steps* and Ethel Lina White's book *The Wheel Spins*, better known to film buffs as Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes*.

One court case later Janus has reined in most of the PD versions of these three movies. The company is now releasing pristine cassettes, struck from 35mm negatives, under its own banner—as well as videodiscs through Criterion, the company that put together the encyclopedic versions of *King Kong* and *Citizen Kane*. Several other orphan movies may also soon find themselves in foster homes whether they want to or not.

Roger Corman's *Little Shop of Horrors* is one of those little tykes. *Shop* has been out on several labels for several years. Only lately, though, has Corman's New Horizons company begun claiming that while a copyright error indeed occurred, it was corrected long ago. Corman convinced Prism Entertainment, for one, to drop its

plans for *Shop*. Prism also stopped its scheduled release of the aforesaid Janus pictures, *Son of Godzilla*, and a Flash Gordon feature culled from matinee serials.

A PD title Prism actually released, *My Man Godfrey*, was also pulled "because we heard MCA may own underlying rights," says company president Barry Collier. Video Gems, meanwhile, has obtained injunctions against companies releasing the Steve McQueen monster-movie *The Blob* and the animated feature *Shinbone Alley*.

Even so, thousands of movies and TV shows remain in the public domain. If even one out of a hundred are viable, low-cost goodies are in no danger of extinction. Those that *do* get pulled will most likely return with excellent audio and video reproduction—definitive versions, though of course at definitive-version prices.

## Pan-American Video North of the Border

The American melting pot has some new stock: Spanish-language video.

Our unofficial second language has already, of course, made prominent inroads in television, notably with the S.I.N. and Galavision cable service. Outside the major metro areas, though, Spanish-viewing choices for the country's 15 to 20 million Hispanics dwindle dramatically. Not many of you grew up with Argentine-Italian parents in West Virginia, but take my word for it—a lot of Spanish-speaking people are in the unlikely places. Fortunately, thanks to video, a slew of programmers are attuned to the diversities of Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, and other Latin cultures.

Spanning virtually all tastes, first of all, are such critically acclaimed films as the staggering *El Norte* (CBS/Fox) and such Luis Bunuel works as *Los Olvidados* and *Viridiana*. You may also still be able to find some of CBS/Fox's 61 Spanish-subtitled cassettes (including *Casablanca*, *Hello Dolly*, *Patton*, and *Star Wars*).

Lately, though, companies like Video Latino in Los Angeles, Telecine Spanish Video in New York City, Madera (formerly Aztec) Cinevideo in Madera, California, VideoCasa in Miami, and Spanish Video Sound in Montebello, California are starting to repopularize such stars as Jorge Rivero, Vicente Fernandez, and comedian Pedro Infante. Hispanic video buffs may not be getting Oscar winners in these companies' offerings (and in the Spanish tapes of Media and Family Home Entertainment), but this is populist cinema, not art.

Some interesting nuggets have turned up. Julio Iglesias fans can track down his 1979 autobiographical fantasy, *Todos Los Dias, Un Dia/Everyday is Another Day*, on the Telecine label. Another popular Spanish actor/singer, Rafael, stars in Telecine's 1975 concert documentary *Rafael en Raphael*.

For the assimilated, LA's Video Visa offers 132 popular American movies dubbed into Spanish. No slouches either: licensed







mostly from Paramount, they include *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (*Cazadores del Arca Perdida*), *Star Trek* (*Viaje a las Estrellas*) and of course the horror movie *Viernes 13* (figure it out).

French- and Italian-language programming is also starting to turn up in places other than Montreal and Little Italy, so it looks as if video's promise of international communication is at least starting.

## Hi-Fi Hijinks: Standards Wanted

The very first Beta Hi-Fi title to roll out when the format arrived amid blaring trumpets was *An Officer and a Gentleman*. Very nice. But nobody at Paramount bothered to tell us it was Beta Hi-Fi *mono*.

Somewhere between the 80 dBs of dynamic range and the 20-20,000 Hz frequency response we were promised, the idea subtly slipped into our minds that Beta and VHS Hi-Fi are necessarily stereo. They're not. But just as audio Compact Disc makers don't always tell you if your digital disc comes from a digital or analog master, video programmers often neglect to tell us if our Hi-Fi tapes are mono, stereo, or mono rechannelled into stereo. The Federal Trade Commission's standards evidently don't apply to video gear—but when it comes to audio equipment, mono sound just doesn't fit the FTC's definition of "high fidelity."

If you're spending top dollar for a Hi-Fi VCR you deserve to know exactly what type of audio you're getting. Some companies are more upfront than others, but the video trade groups—the Electronic Industries Association and the Video Software Dealers Association—should standardize audio labels for video.

If it's Hi-Fi stereo, say so. If it's Hi-Fi mono, say so. And if it's something nifty—recorded from a digital master, perhaps—sat that too. Otherwise it's simply deception.

# TOP 10 PROGRAMS

## Cassette Sales

**1. Jane Fonda's Workout** (1). \* Color. 1982. Jane Fonda assisted by seven instructors. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

**2. Prince and the New Power Generation Live** (4). Color. 1985. Concert video features "When Doves Cry," "Let's Go Crazy," others. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Warner.

**3. We Are the World—The Video Event** (3). Color. 1985. USA for Africa: Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, Lionel Richie, etc. 33 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. RCA/Columbia.

**4. Jane Fonda's Prime Time Workout** (6). Color. 1984. 50 min. Beta, VHS (closed captions). \$39.95. Karl.

**5. Wham! The Video** (8). Color. 1985. Music video clips, including "Wake Me Up (Before You Go-Go)," "Everything She Wants," more. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

**6. Desperately Seeking Susan** (-). Color. 1985. Rosanna Arquette, Madonna, Aidan Quinn, Mark Blum, Richard Hell. 104 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**7. Wrestlemania** (5). Color. 1985. Hulk Hogan, Mr. T, Rowdy Roddy Piper, others. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Coliseum.

**8. Singin' in the Rain** (7). Color. 1952. Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, Donald O'Connor. 103 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MGM/UA.

**9. Pinocchio** (2). Color. 1940. Animated. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Disney.

**10. The Jane Fonda Workout Challenge** (-). Color. 1984. The graduate course. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

## Videodisc Sales

**1. The Korote Kid** (1). Color. 1984. Ralph Macchio, Noriyuki "Pat" Morita, Elizabeth Shue. 126 min. (PG) LV (stereo, CX, closed captions). \$34.95. CED. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

**2. Starman** (2). Color. 1984. Jeff Bridges, Karen Allen. 115 min. (PG) LV, CED. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

**3. A Soldier's Story** (-). Color. 1984. Howard E. Rollins Jr., Adolph Caesar, Denzel Washington, Larry Riley. 101 min. (PG) LV, CED. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

**4. 2010: The Year We Make Contact** (4). Color. 1984. Roy Scheider, John Lithgow. 116 min. (PG) LV, CED. \$34.95. MGM/UA.

**5. Runaway** (-). Color. 1984. Tom Selleck, Cynthia Rhodes, Gene Simmons. (PG-13) LV, CED. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

**6. Missing in Action** (3). Color. 1984. Chuck Norris. 101 min. (R) LV, CED. \$34.95. MGM/UA.

**7. Pinocchio** (7). See above, "Cassette Sales." LV. \$34.95. Disney.

**8. Dune** (5). Color. 1984. Kyle MacLachlan, Sting. 137 min. (PG-13) LV. \$34.98. MCA.

**9. The River** (6). Color. 1984. Sissy Spacek, Mel Gibson. 123 min. (PG-13) LV. \$39.98. MCA.

**10. Protocol** (10). Color.

1984. Goldie Hawn. 96 min. (PG) LV. \$34.98. Warner.

## Cassette Rentals

**1. Desperately Seeking Susan** (-). As above, "Cassette Sales." Thorn EMI/HBO.

**2. The Killing Fields** (-). Color. 1984. Sam Waterston, Dr. Haing S. Ngor, John Malkovich. 142 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Warner.

**3. The Karate Kid** (1). As above, "Videodisc Sales." Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**4. A Soldier's Story** (2). As above, "Videodisc Sales." Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**5. The Sure Thing** (-). Color. 1984. John Cusack, Daphne Zuniga, Nicolette Sheridan, Boyd Gaines. 95 min. (PG-13) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Embassy.

**6. Starman** (4). As above, "Videodisc Sales." Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**7. The Falcon and the Snowman** (3). Color. 1985. Timothy Hutton, Sean Penn. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Vestron.

**8. A Nightmare on Elm Street** (5). Color. 1984. John Saxon, Ronee Blakely. 92 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Media.

**9. Stick** (-). Color. 1985. Burt Reynolds, George Segal, Candice Bergen, Charles Durning. 109 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MCA.

**10. A Passage to India** (-). Color. 1984. Victor Banerjee, Judy Davis, Dame Peggy Ashcroft, Alec Guinness. 163 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

\*Number in parentheses indicates position last month; (-) indicates a new listing.

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# R E V I E W S

## FILM CLIPS

Produced for Theaters

### Amadeus

Color. 1984. F. Murray Abraham, Thomas Hulce, Roy Dotrice; dir. Milos Forman. Music: Neville Marriner cond. Academy of St. Martin in the Field. 160 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Thorn EMI/HBO. Reproduction: B+

One of the last credits for *Amadeus* notes that the Prague National Theatre was in fact the site of the premiere of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, not Vienna as in the movie. This points up what is, or should be, common knowledge about Mozart, Salieri, and the play/movie *Amadeus*: It is *not* history. It is not meant to be history. Salieri *did* die insisting he did not murder Mozart, as a popular rumor had suggested, but he did it as a major figure in his time, a well-known composer and the teacher of Schubert and Liszt. *Amadeus* works this bit of trivia into a modern play and film whose greatest virtues lie in their sure sense of the theatrical—as opposed to the real.

I am making a big deal of this because Peter Shaffer, author of the play and screenplay, has convinced many people who should know better that *Amadeus* is what happened. His meditation on the jealousy of the more popular lesser artist for the clearly greater one is a theme appropriate to these bottom-line-oriented times—for Shaffer, Salieri is every middle manager who succeeds in covering his ass, every coworker who stonewalls another's progress, anyone who performs competently enough but looks out for #1 regardless of the cost. He has this man call himself the "patron saint of mediocrity," and simultaneously sees him as Don Giovanni heroically marching unrepentant into hell and Don Ottavio griggishly watching from the sidelines.

And that is the source of the film's lack of greatness. F. Murray Abraham's award-winning Salieri is cultured, charming, and clandestinely at war with God for



giving Mozart the gift he felt he deserved. He is far more interesting than the conceited, childish Mozart—a man who, as Shaffer/Salieri tells the story, seems incapable of doing anything, much less writing *Don Giovanni*. The concept's weakness is its theatrical strength: we identify with the charming villain, who after all is more like us, rather than the genius whom we cannot hope to be.

Like his *Equus*, Shaffer's *Amadeus* glorifies the fascination we feel for the extreme and the envy we feel at the ability of extremists to be the way they are. Since this is an odd attitude to feel so strongly about, I can only conclude that Shaffer must think himself trapped by the passionless mediocrity his main characters embody. He may laugh all the way to the bank at this idea, but one thing is clear—he is no Mozart, no Shaw or Ibsen, and *Amadeus* is no *Pygmalion*. It is an amusing two-and-a-

half hours that, like Salieri's operas, are dramatic entertainment on a tasteful but middling level. It is almost too competent, from the writing to Milos Forman's direction to the performances (with the exception of Elizabeth Berridge, who is just not up to it) to the very idea itself.

Even the VHS transfer is standard issue—very professional, but no better or worse than most new releases of big pictures. The stereo sound of this VHS Hi-Fi tape preserves the striking sound editing of the film along with Neville Marriner's slightly bombastic versions of Mozart's greatest operatic hits (which, to be fair, are more in tune with performance techniques of the period than the rest of this movie).

Perhaps I seem somewhat harsh, but, to quote the *New York Times*' Harold Schoenberg, Mozart was often light but "never cheap."

—M. George Stevenson



## Blood Simple

Color. 1984. Frances McDormand, Dan Hedaya, John Getz, M. Emmet Walsh; dir. Ethan Coen. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MCA. Reproduction: B+

*Blood Simple* shares with the films of Scorsese and De Palma that fascination with the timing and atmosphere of death. What it has of its own is the acute vision of the Coen brothers (Ethan directed, Joel produced, both scripted): they raise the elements of death, killing, and dying to the level of slapstick.

With little dialogue—except the occasional Southwestern graffiti of comments like “How come you’re anal and I got to go to a psychiatrist?”—the filmmakers manage to tell their story in a very cinematic way. That is, by the visual poetry of gesture and innuendo. The innuendos are left in telltale symbols like the slimy paid killer’s Zippo, which he keeps leaving behind, and the clipped patter of roadhouses dotting the soundtrack. Punctuations of heavy breathing, bodies being dragged, and pregnant silences also have their part in this original vocabulary of images and sounds.

The kick of watching this movie—and there is a kick—is in the style with which it weaves its spell: in the language of overhead fans and no-tell motels, in the foreshortened camera angles and the deadpan philosophy inherent in its loser characters’ interest to the filmmakers. That the movie is also a splendid potboiler and a whodunit of sorts is an extra bonus.

—Noë Goldwasser

## The Sure Thing

Color. 1984. John Cusack, Daphne Zuniga, Boyd Gaines; dir. Rob Reiner. 95 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Embassy. Reproduction: A+

After the spate of sleazy teen sex comedies that have littered the screen in the past few years, Hollywood seems to be turning back to romance. Whether this is a manifestation of the new sensitivity or the new Puritanism remains to be seen. The new romances, at any rate, still star teens, but it turns out they don’t want one-night stands after all. They want relationships. *The Sure Thing*, Rob Reiner’s thinly-disguised modernization of *It Happened One Night*, is arguably the best of the romantic bunch. It’s odd that the director of the snide *This Is Spinal Tap* should create such a sweet-natured film, but this is one from the heart of *schmaltz* that beats in every Hollywood breast.

The use of virtual unknowns John Cusack and Daphne Zuniga as starcrossed lovers is inspired casting, mostly because they *don’t* work well together: a real clash of personalities lends plausibility to the action. Cusack, so alternately *klutzy* and manic that you can’t help but love him, suffers from a lack of sexual victims in college and accepts an invitation to spend Christmas in California where a “sure thing” awaits. Setting out, though, he immediately hooks up with his nemesis (Zuni-

ga), and the ensuing comedy of errors brings them precariously close to each other’s arms. By the time they reach Los Angeles—well, the romantic screwball comedy has become an American ritual, and rituals aren’t *supposed* to change, so it doesn’t matter if you can figure out the ending right now.

*The Sure Thing*’s quirkiness, energy, and humor (captured flawlessly on VHS) makes the overworked sentimentality seem new and immediate; Reiner, Cusack, Zuniga, and writers Steven L. Bloom and Jonathan Richards are talents to watch.

—Steven Grant

## The Falcon and the Snowman

Color. 1984. Sean Penn, Timothy Hutton; dir. John Schlesinger. 131 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Vestron. Reproduction: A-

You can’t ask for a more timely release of the film version of Robert Lindsey’s shocking-but-true tale of people selling defense secrets to the Russians; at press-time, the headlines are full of similar cases. But if you’re seeking insight into what may lead “ordinary people” to betray their country, you won’t find it in *The Falcon and the Snowman*. John Schlesinger suggests that a combination of greed, political naivete, and upper-middle-class ennui are enough to drive one to sell Uncle Sam down the river, but all the bleached-out bourgeois Southern California landscape and old Watergate footage in the world isn’t going to explain why a decent kid like Christopher Boyce—son of an FBI man, goddammit!—swipes invaluable communications codes from his top-secret defense-contractor job and passes them off to his drug-dealer buddy Daulton Lee.

That enigma aside, there’s much to praise here, especially the performances of the two leads. Timothy Hutton as Boyce has played this type of morally confused, Catholic-raised suburbanite before, and here he wrings every bit of stiff-up-

per-lipped agony the part allows. Matching him is Sean Penn as Lee, a messed-up kid who can’t tell the difference between a spy novel and the grim real thing. Penn may well be his generation’s Robert DeNiro; he approaches every role with *kamikaze* fervor, flirting dangerously along the line between a convincing performance and one that merely draws attention to itself. The two stars are bolstered by a fine supporting cast, especially David Suchet as the KGB agent whose transformation to nastiness reminds us that Russians can be even meaner than CIA guys. However, ditzzy Lori Singer does little to salvage a poorly developed love interest with Hutton.

No complaints about the VHS transfer—the exteriors of Southern California and Mexico, as well as the dingy code room from which Hutton swipes his secrets, are vividly drawn. You don’t miss a note of the classy Pat Metheny/Lyle Mays score. Nor do you miss the experience of seeing this in a large theater—Schlesinger’s point is that headline-making espionage is ultimately a tiny human tale, and the excellent work he evokes from Hutton and Penn underlines that point with gusto.

—Steven Levy

## Birdy

Color. 1984. Matthew Modine, Nicholas Cage, John Harkins; dir. Alan Parker. 120 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia. Reproduction: A

Based on the novel by William Wharton, *Birdy* might more appropriately have been called *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* if that title weren’t already taken. As in the earlier film, questions of madness and sanity are paramount, and for once director Alan Parker (*Midnight Express*, *Fame*) doesn’t go for cheap or easy answers.

Parker’s films have always functioned on Pavlovian response rather than intelligence, and *Birdy* also has the makings of a Parker mystery play filled with stock characters wearing politicized banners. On the one side there’s the institutional enemy



The Falcon and the Snowman



(here, the military and its avatar, Vietnam, and socially rigid families); on the other, the heroic innocents (Birdy, self-exiled into his own head, and his friend Al, whose face and leg have been ruined in the war). The enemy assaults them not out of pique but out of impersonal immovability. Al suffers—oh! how he suffers!—flashbacks to his carefree youth as he races a time limit to bring Birdy back from madness before the army labels him incurably insane.

But Birdy may be crazy, and *Birdy* is a harrowing journey down the thin line between normality and stupidity, between obsession and madness. The film rises above its strained storyline and Parker's mechanistic directing for one reason: the brilliant acting of Nicholas Cage as Al and Matthew Modine as Birdy. Their performances alone are worth the price of admission, their chemistry supercharging the drab institutional and urban settings with humor and humanity in the same way that the surprise quasi-payoff converts two hours of unrelenting grimness into an entertaining black comedy. For once, Parker has quelled his showy "style" for the sake of the material and thematically settled for the ambiguity of an imperfect world; let's hope he does it more often. VHS reproduction is excellent too.

—Steven Grant

### It's a Wonderful Life

B&W. 1946. Jimmy Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore, Thomas Mitchell; dir. Frank Capra. 130 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism. Reproduction: B

*It's a Wonderful Life* is my favorite movie as well as one of the greatest ever made. How can I say this about a Christmas movie in which a guardian angel with "the IQ of a rabbit" comes to the rescue of the hyperefficient Jimmy Stewart? About a movie that ends with everybody drinking eggnog and singing "Auld Lang Syne?" Because *It's a Wonderful Life* is a comedy that conforms to Aristotelian precepts, because it is the darkest "happy ending" picture I have ever seen, and because it keeps me in tears from beginning to end even after 30 viewings.

How does Frank Capra do it, you ask? Simply by being truthful. George Bailey (Stewart) is a pretty nice guy, but nothing special. In fact, he's a smart aleck, quick-tempered, and not a little vain. He doesn't so much live for others as live for their respect. But he gets it because he deserves it, and that makes all the difference. And while few of us have lives as thwarted as his, few of us have lives so truly wonderful: Donna Reed, a backdoor achievement of his deepest ambition, the quality and quantity of real friends. Yet he is blind to them (as most of us are to what we value most) until he is able to see what they would be without him.

The genius of this movie is to convey this rather sober plot with plenty of graceful humor, real drama, and such sure-handed manipulation of our heartstrings

that one cries from pleasure at being so beautifully handled as well as in sympathy with the perfectly realized characters. Capra made many a picture that tugged at the heart, but never one so unabashedly sentimental and classically satisfying.

Prism might have chosen a better print for its VHS transfer, but this is easier said than done. The image is scratchy and faded in places, but the sound is fine.

—M. George Stevenson

### Seance on a Wet Afternoon

B&W. 1968. Kim Stanley, Richard Attenborough; dir. Bryan Forbes. 111 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VidAmerica. Reproduction: B+

Until recently Kim Stanley was a mystery woman as far as the movies were concerned. A stage actress who grew out of the Actor's Studio in New York in the mid-1950s and appeared in some live golden-age television, Stanley was a New York stage star always thought to be one of Broadway's natural treasures—but a rare and inaccessible one. She has a remarkably small body of work, though that is changing with her film appearances in *Frances* and *The Right Stuff* and her cable role in the recent Jessica Lange *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

Ten years elapsed between her screen debut in *The Goddess* and her second film, *Seance on a Wet Afternoon*, and even in this—an odd but compelling thriller that has her quietly teetering on the brink of madness—Stanley has undeniable charisma. In fact, it's hard to watch anything else when she's on the screen, though the quietness of her performance makes for no big moments. She plays a clairvoyant who holds seances to contact the departed through her (fabricated) stillborn son. To make the public realize just how serious she is, she concocts a plan, with the help of her frightened weak-willed husband (Richard Attenborough), to kidnap a little girl and persuade her parents that her

"powers" can find the child. (There's a reward out for information about the child, but it's credibility she's after.)

The plan goes awry when she decides her long-departed "son" is lonely, and that maybe the little girl should stay on the side of the spirits. *Seance* ends rather neatly as the police close in on her, *Baby Jane*-like, before the ghastly finale can be enacted—but Stanley remains blissfully unaware that she's part of a horror story at all, and that's what makes *Seance* distinctly un-*Baby Jane*-like. This is no flamboyant star turn but an internal portrayal of ordinary dementia.

Bryan Forbes directs unobtrusively although the grey atmosphere becomes oppressive during the slow mood-filled buildup. His unlikely choice of leading lady pays off, however, because Kim Stanley gives her character a realism that is strong, coquettish, frightened, and willful—at least two more emotions than an unaccomplished actress might have found in the script.

Apparently working from the best available materials, VidAmerica has reproduced *Seance* with acceptable clarity. At times it screams out for more contrast—but we're in London and it's raining, so the dullness is appropriate.

—Harvey Elliott

### Painters Painting

B&W. 1972. Dir. Emile de Antonio. 116 min. Beta, VHS, U-Matic. \$79.95; rentals available also. New Video (contact Michael Pollack, New Video Center, 276 Third Ave., N.Y.C. 10010; 212-475-7400; 1-800-431-2299). Reproduction: B-

Perhaps the most misunderstood group of American artists, most of whom were dubbed "abstract expressionists," surfaced in the 1950s. These guys were up to something different, and the only thing critics agreed on was that their art wasn't figurative. Jackson Pollock, from Cody,



Painters Painting



Wyoming, splashed colors on large canvases; Mark Rothko painted in monolith; Barnett Newman contemplated the stripe. In the 1960s, the pop artists emerged. Robert Rauschenberg, in coming up with yet a new use for yesterday's newspaper, perfected the collage; Andy Warhol reinvented the Campbell's soup can; Jasper Johns experimented with texture while busily painting targets and flags. His beer-cans sculpture was as much a statement about objects and art as Marcel Duchamp's famous urinal had been many years before. You would love it or hate it, but most of all you'd react to it.

Emile de Antonio, an important independent filmmaker, put together a rather sloppy, erratic history of this period. Art historians jokingly refer to it as "Painters Talking," mainly because it's more verbal than visual. It's a document mainly for the experts—an interesting one, because de Antonio does his best to get the artists to intellectualize their lives' work. Yet it doesn't work, and I think de Antonio was unwittingly finished before he started. Pollock, for example, was continually asked throughout his career to explain his work, and he was shy to the point of being inarticulate. "Action painting," as one critic called his work, was largely visceral.

What de Antonio conveniently ignores is that many truly creative painters are dull dinner-party conversationalists. If you haven't dozed off during one of the many interviews, Rauschenberg will do it. He goes on forever. Let's see the Rauschenbergs, already. The interviews with collector Robert Scull and dealer Leo Castelli are brief antidotes to the endless monologues of artists explaining how they choose a certain color.

Technically, de Antonio wasn't equipped to show the rich, brilliant color that was the trademark of so many 1950s painters. This is one movie that isn't helped by being in black & white. You won't get much of an idea of what the paintings are like from this film; it's flat and lifeless. Some art films, after all, should be about the work and not about the artists.

—Doug Garr

### Burroughs: The Movie

Color/B&W. 1983. Dir. Howard Brookner. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. *Giorno Poetry Systems* (222 Bowery, N.Y.C. 10012). Reproduction: B

For most of his literary career William Burroughs has been most blatantly guilty of moperee, the crime of exposing oneself to a blind person. Throughout the '50s and most of the '60s Burroughs' disjointed vision of opiated homosexuality and sci-fi pessimism was perceived by the public with a mere uncomfortable squint, and the author of *Naked Lunch*, *Nova Express*, et al. was hailed as a prophet only by the tiny Beat enclave of Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and their periphery.

The '70s found Burroughs graduated from scum mole to pop icon and he out-brunched Andy and Jackie with the best of



Burroughs: The Movie

them. However, if the media focus of that liberated decade made the world open its eyes to Burroughs' unique vision, this 1983 documentary virtually props open your eyelids with toothpicks. As a statement of Burroughs' life and literary sensibility, *Burroughs: The Movie* may well be the most entertaining and dynamic documentary on a living author to date.

Director Howard Brookner has brilliantly layered segments that range from interviews with intimates, relatives, and idolators (including Ginsberg, Brion Gysin, Terry Southern, and Patti Smith) to more recent footage of Burroughs at home in "the bunker," his New York lair, and on a walking tour of his birthplace, St. Louis. Most intriguing are moments with the most tragic straggler in the parade, Billy Burroughs Jr. (who failed to either live up to or outlive his celebrated pa) and surrogate "son"/secretary James Grauerholz. Burroughs even makes a dramatic appearance as the unhygienic Dr. Benway in a bit of scripted lunacy.

*Burroughs'* one deficiency is its relentless focus on the downside of Burroughs the public figure at the expense of a more focused history of his progress as a writer. His prose is woven throughout, but virtually no distinction is made between the components of his prodigious output. Nevertheless, the gregarious star of *Burroughs* will be a revelation to readers who perceive him solely as the man the South Americans referred to as "El Hombre Invisible," and ceaselessly entertaining to connoisseurs of black humor.

—John Walker

### Kerouac

Color. 1984. Jack Coulter; dir. John Antonelli. 72 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. *Active*. Reproduction: B

Life's a drag, man, dig? Like here's this cat Jack Kerouac—a real Byronic dude, starry-eyed and all that jazz—with a typewriter Jones. Like, grooving over a keyboard—Smith-Corona, not Steinway—is

the cat's scene, dig? So he's pounding out the verbals while the publisher cats are doing the cucumber bit. Then, flukesville! *On the Road* gets out and Jack the bear shazams into a literary lion. Is it the happily-ever-after scene? No way, Jack! My man loses it and does a long slide, complete with bottle, into a nice, cool, dark, quiet box. The end, baby.

About 15 orbits later John Antonelli has turned Kerouac's life into the movie we knew it was all along. The "king of the Beats" flies again as he splits Lowell, Massachusetts, makes the New York college scene, ships out to sea, and thumbs it over to California. Another Jack, Coulter, solos for Kerouac in these reenacted shots, usually while narrator Peter Coyote exhales from Kerouac's autobiographical etchings. We also dig some all-star talking heads—Allen Ginsberg, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, William Burroughs, Herbert Huncke, Seymour Krim, Robert Creeley, others—wailing on the Kerouac they knew.

The biggest chill of all is digging Kerouac himself in a clip from a 1959 *Steve Allen Show*. Kerouac endures Steverino trying to be hip, then lays down a crazy blast from his own stash that Coyote should have picked up. Kerouac also appears in a bit with William Buckley (pardon the expression); K was ready for his coda by then, and he doesn't fake it.

So they call this jazz "docudrama." *Kerouac* is more MJQ than Bird—like, calm. But if you're not hip to the cat, or need a quick cram for your college course, this is a painless excuse to stare at the boob tube. Some cool sounds in here too, plus a couple of wild blackouts between film reels. Here's to Jack, and to all our failed potential. Crazy.

—Bop Isler



Kerouac



# QUICK TAKES/FILM

## A Star Is Born

Color. 1937. Janet Gaynor, Fredric March, Adolphe Menjou; dir. William Wellman. 111 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism. Reproduction: A

This is the Hollywood classic: Janet Gaynor, first Oscar-winning Best Actress, being as sweet and tough as can be; Fredric March giving an underrated performance of real wit and charm; the Dorothy Parker/Alan Campbell script radiating intelligence; Wellman's beautiful work with the cumbersome early Technicolor process. This, not the 1954 Garland/Mason version, is the standard. The tragedy here is more effective because everything falls so naturally in place that it seems effortless—Gaynor *knows* she's a star, something poor Judy never quite believed. And Prism, much to its credit, has given the VHS transfer star treatment.

—M. George Stevenson

## Our Town

B&W. 1940. William Holden, Martha Scott, Frank Craven, Fay Bainter; dir. Sam Wood. 89 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism. Reproduction: C

Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer Prize-winning ode to smalltown America at the turn of the century may seem appealing to many viewers in this age of "traditional values." However, the rest of us can only be numbed by the wealth of detail about mythical Grover's Corner, New Hampshire (how many folksy aphorisms can you stand in 89 minutes?). The movie lacks the play's novel bare stage setting and criminally tampers with the ending (although Wilder himself worked on the script). Its two main strengths are young Holden as the tongue-tied Gibbs and a rousing score by Aaron Copland. The B&W print is washed out and loaded with splices, scratches, and dirt, making it hard to appreciate the wonderful production design by William Cameron Menzies.

—Tom Soter

## Becky Sharp

Color. 1935. Miriam Hopkins, Frances Dee, Sir Cedric Hardwicke; dir. Rouben Mamoulian. 83 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes. Reproduction: C

This one's noteworthy as the first Technicolor feature and for how bad a screen adaptation of Thackeray (*Vanity Fair*) can be. The Victorian author's complex satire of 19th-century society has been turned into a broad costume picture, a period melodrama with several actors competing for Worst Performance by a Recognizable Artist. The Grand Prize for Archness, Stylization, and Awful Acting has to go to Miriam



am Hopkins, however. With her portrayal of Becky she has singlehandedly turned Thackeray's much-admired temptress-you-love-to-hate into a crashing bore: not only simpleminded, but simply unbelievable. And if the premier print of this initial color movie had been as bad as this one—with oranges and blues dominating among the film's many scratches, skips, and dirt marks—Hollywood might never have continued with color. Not to mention period pictures.

—Tom Soter

## The Saint Strikes Back/Criminal Court

B&W. 1939/1941. George Sanders, Wendy Barrie, Barry Fitzgerald; dir. John Farrow/Tom Conway, Martha O'Driscoll; dir. Robert Wise. 127 min. (both). Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO. Reproduction: A-

This double bill illustrates that the 1930s and '40s were amazingly different times. When Sanders as the Saint says "you're too pretty to be clever" to foe/inamorata Barrie, it's supposed to be charming. What's worse, it is charming. *Criminal Court* is no better on this score but suffers from not having Conway's brother Sanders, though Wise's direction is tauter than Farrow's in *The Saint Strikes Back*. They're both old-movie fun if not taken seriously. A cheap, well-reproduced lark.

—M. George Stevenson

## That Sinking Feeling

Color. 1979. Robert Buchanan, John Hughes, Billy Greenless; dir. Bill Forsyth. 82 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy. Reproduction: A-

Bill Forsyth's gentle and eccentric Scottish comedies always possess an undertone of sadness. You'll find it in gawky Gregory's failure to win his *Girl*, in the wistfulness of a yuppie oilman turned *Local Hero* in a lively coastal village, or in the

escapades of a lonely DJ who has to invent his own *Comfort and Joy*. *That Sinking Feeling*, Forsyth's first feature film, begins with the reality of unemployment among Glasgow youths and turns into a half-baked lark about robbing a warehouse of porcelain sinks. Using actors from the Glasgow Youth Theatre (some of whom he'd hire again later), Forsyth turns a small idea into an engaging little movie that nonetheless dances precariously close to self-consciousness and showing off. Though the VHS cassette has the grainy look of enlarged 16mm, it's sharp and clear in its grain. Glasgow looks ugly.

—Harvey Elliott

## Mass Appeal

Color. 1985. Jack Lemmon, Zeljko Ivanek, Charles Durning; dir. Glenn Jordan. 99 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MCA. Reproduction: B+

*Mass Appeal* is an interesting though not altogether successful inversion of the classic young-hothead-vs.-authority-figure skirmish, waged this time on the battlefield of a posh Catholic parish. Jack Lemmon is his perennially likable self as Father Tim Farley, whose comfortable existence is disturbed by a pain-in-the-ass seminarian. If this film had been made 20 years ago, the seminarian would have been the wiseguy. Here, however, the all-American-acting Zeljko Ivanek plays the challenger with such unrelenting humorlessness that his stony countenance sinks what almost coalesces into an intriguing crisis-of-faith parable. Close, but no salvation.

—John Walker

## Into the Night

Color. 1985. Jeff Goldblum, Michelle Pfeiffer, Paul Mazursky, Dan Aykroyd, David Bowie; dir. John Landis. 115 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MCA. Reproduction: A

Jeff Goldblum can't sleep. His wife is unfaithful, his best friend is a cad, and his job is a dead end. So he goes to the airport in vague search for adventure and finds it in the person of a beautiful blonde jewel smuggler (Michelle Pfeiffer) being chased by four nasty Iranians. The two race off into a tepid potsimmerer that degenerates to a series of suspenseless chase scenes leavened by leaden slapstick. As a supporting actor, Goldblum makes a poignantly ironic critical void, a bland nonentity coolly surveying the insanely hot world. But in a starring role, his nothingness becomes a liability. With no spark and no chemistry, *Into the Night* goes down without a fight—a waste of a fine VHS transfer.

—John Leland



## Golden Jubilee

### 24 Karat Collection

#### Warner Brothers Cartoons

*Bugs Bunny's Wacky Adventures, Daffy Duck: The Nuttiness Continues..., Porky Pig's Screwball Comedies, Road Runner vs. Wile E. Coyote: The Classic Chase, Speedy Gonzales' Fast Funnies, Sylvester & Tweety's Crazy Capers, A Salute to Mel Blanc, A Salute to Friz Freleng, A Salute to Chuck Jones. Color (B&W where indicated). Compiled 1985. Approx. 58 min. ea. Beta, VHS. \$19.98 ea. Warner.*

For true animation fans, this Warner Brothers collection had more tempting pre-release hype than the two Disney *Limited Edition Gold* collections that came before it. After all, more Ph.D. dissertations have been written about the iconographic significance of Daffy Duck than Mickey and his pals have mustered. Walt's characters tend to get used as symbols in arguments about capitalism in South America. But for good old kick-'em-in-the-pants entertainment you can't beat Bugs and Daffy. So any celebration of these heroes' zany non-philosophy is great in this world of stick-figure animation. That's why the Museum of Modern Art is celebrating these Warner cartoons with an exhibit—and why Bugs just got his star on Hollywood Boulevard.

Each of the nine programs in this collection contains eight thematically arranged cartoons, all reverently transferred from pristine prints. The programs in this group are mostly by Chuck Jones, with the rest from Friz Freleng and a handful from Robert McKimson. One Tex Avery cartoon, the 1937 "Porky's Duck Hunt"—the first cartoon in which Daffy appears—represents the wackiest of sensibilities at the Warners studio. Avery's colleague Bob Clampett also is represented by only one cartoon in this batch.

No company man, Avery left Warners over a dispute about a cartoon's ending and for many years worked for MGM. The cartoons he directed—among them parodies of pop idols of the '30s and '40s and elaborate creations of false doors and architecture that floated in space—were the zaniest and the most surreal at the studio. Clampett's were the wackiest. All this leads me to believe that a second selection of Warners' 24 Karaters will be released. Plenty more is in the vaults and Warners has packaged some of these stories for home video before ("Duck Dodgers In the 24-1/2th Century," "Duck Amuck," "Rabbit Fire," "What's Opera Doc," and some of the Roadrunner selections already have appeared in Warner Home Video's *The Bugs Bunny/Road Runner Movie*). So let's hope for the best, put our quibbles aside, and appreciate the material at hand.

Warner Brothers' decision to release these action thriller cartoons is a positive statement about the use of violence in programming that reaches kids. Though they were originally intended for adult audiences in movie theaters, they trickled down to toddlers via the Saturday-morning

# VIDEO CLIPS

Produced for Home Viewing

tube. The mentality they're aimed at really lies somewhere in between: the ideal audience would be grown-up kids and adults in a second-childhood phase. But any viewer, kid or parent, can accept the way characters are chopped up, exploded, shot at, or crushed by falling objects—because in the next scene, there they are, whole again and ready for more.

Then there is the sheer art-imitating-life lunacy of Warner's more special cartoons, one or two of which grace each of these programs. The Daffy Duck collection has a few great classics, but then I'm partial to Daffy. Take "Duck Amuck," a 1953 Chuck Joneser in which Daffy is constantly talking to the camera trying to get a lame animator to make with the brush. The animator enjoys being able to put Daffy through changes as he paints on various outfits and paints in various degrees of antigravity. The driving dramatic force in this cartoon is Daffy's hamminess. The phantom animator paints in a guitar and Daffy starts to play the serenading *caballero*. But wait—where's the sound? "OK, wise guy," says Daffy with a hand-held sign. Then the sound comes on—the guitar makes machine-gun sounds, a car horn, everything but guitar sounds.

The Daffy collection also contains Clampett's only contribution to this auspicious celebration of animation, the 1938 "The Daffy Doc," and Avery's "Porky's Duck

Hunt." "Doc" is black & white, but it's one of those crazy things that stick from your childhood. In one bit of business Daffy hits himself over the head with a mallet and has a conference with his two "ghosts." "Duck Hunt" is sheer beauty. And the Daffy program also has Chuck Jones' "The Scarlet Pumpernickel" (1937), in which Hollywood gets heavily wisecracked.

*Porky Pig's Screwball Comedies* is another good one if you're going to buy only two or three of these programs. It contains animator's shenanigans with popular '40s icons, replete with references to Freud and Dali. A pair by Friz Freleng illustrates this: "Cracked Quack" (1942) has Daffy driving Porky's dog nuts, while "Dough for the Do-Do" (1949) is a return to Bob Clampett's Wackyland with Freudian creatures and soft-watch landscapes.

The *Salute to Mel Blanc*—the incredible voice behind most Warners characters—contains "The Rabbit of Seville," a 1950 Chuck Jones demonstration of the creative use of the WB orchestra, but the *Salute to Chuck Jones* has the most genuine collector's items: the *Star Wars*-like "Duck Dodgers" and Jones' ultimate production number, "What's Opera Doc" (1957), in which De Chirico landscapes converge on horse-carried valkyries and a happy wedding between Bugs and Elmer.

Road Runner fans will notice I have not singled out their craving—but one of these tapes has, and real devotees of Jones' creations will also find meat in the Sylvester and Tweety collection, directed by Freleng.

Technical credits are great, especially in the Hi-Fi formats (I use Beta), which take full advantage of these cartoons' sophisticated band treatments and cartoonal timing. And though you tend to notice repeating gags and returning sight tricks, if you love animation, you'll come to identify these as auteurs' personal stamps and savor them all the more.

—Noë Goldwasser





**Richard Thompson:  
Across a Crowded Room**

Color. 1985. 84 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Sony/LV. \$24.95. Pioneer.

Richard Thompson is a folk-rock singer-songwriter, or so the conventional wisdom goes. The cries and whispers of his guitar playing echo from the British Isles, down to the Middle East, over to Nashville, and back again. If a limited term like "folk-rock" can embrace that kind of eclectic universality, count him in. His songs—including "Withered and Died," the encore here—are performing favorites of peer/fan Elvis Costello. If that makes him a member of the "singer-songwriter" club, so be it. But conventional wisdom tends to look like hyphenated foolishness when it tries to cram such an expansive talent into such narrow pigeonholes.

The concert video of *Across a Crowded Room* draws 7 of its 18 songs from the studio LP of the same name, adding a few old tunes dating as far back as 1974, one brand-new one (the amusingly cynical "I'm Nearly in Love"), one new cover version (of Sparkle Moore's obscure rock & roller "Skull and Cross Bones"), and a tune by rhythm guitarist Clive Gregson, here on loan from his own band Any Trouble. The white-heat raveup of "For Shame of Doing Wrong," "Bright Lights" with a Mideast-skewed intro not on the LP version, and the bandless, world-weary "Withered and Died" are all welcome as old friends. Vocal sweetening from Christine Collister and Gregson helps Richard reclaim them for himself though the glowing memory of the originals—sung by former wife and performing partner Linda Thompson—remains strong. Most of the other songs are from Richard's past three records, as if to stress that an artist who can release a Beta/VHS videocassette (in excellent Hi-Fi), LV videodisc, LP, CD, and audio cassette all under the same title needn't dwell on the past.

That's fine; *Across a Crowded Room* shows off Thompson's strongest recent set of songs and a powerful live mix by Simon Tassano and Al Kooper sets off not only his perpetually inventive guitar work but the band's strong ensemble vocals. Even Gerry Conway—whose live work usually prompts fond memories of drum master Dave Mattacks, Thompson's old Fairport Convention bandmate—turns in a relatively tight performance along with rookie bassist Raurie McFarlane, whose playing shows a fondness for upper-string ornamentation. Director Larry Jordan's fast-moving editing maintains a brisk visual pace and adds the occasional odd conceptual condiment (a shattering lightbulb for "Shoot Out the Lights" alongside more cryptic touches), though his somewhat prefab editing rhythm tends to cut away from fretboard action in a way that will frustrate guitar students.

What I'd like to see is a companion concert documentary to cover the side of Thompson's performing that this one total-

ly ignores: his solo acoustic work. Not only does this once reclusive man commune with a club audience with the best of 'em—he pours out a geyser of measured emotion, amusing chitchat, and musical brinkmanship. The delicate dynamics of an acoustic performance also show off his voice to better effect and would be an admirable use of VCR Hi-Fi and digital laser technology—a damn sight better than Wham! Duran, thank you ma'am. How about it, Sony and PolyGram? I want to see the bright lights tonight.

—Mark Fleischmann

**Huey Lewis and the News:  
The Heart of Rock 'n' Roll**

Color. 1985. Huey Lewis; dir. Bruce Gowen. Beta, VHS. 53 min. \$29.98. Warner.

People like what they know. And boy, do they know Huey Lewis. He's their cool friend's even cooler older brother, the good old boy who spent his days at the park bouncing a basketball and his nights at high-school dances bouncing through rock standards. He sang those old songs so well and so long that he finally hit the big time. Knew he could do it all along.

Huey Lewis is the perfect manufacturer of American rock in the '80s. He's an all-American success story. He reassembles all the best-loved clichés in a way that's just fresh enough to sound new and just predictable enough to sound familiar. He's the Henry Ford of American rock, and his hits roll off the assembly line in one color to universal satisfaction. He even begins his show with "The Star Spangled Banner."

A bass-drum heartbeat pounds in sync with a pulsating red light on the drumkit. The Tower of Power horns cast wriggling shadows in a five-man silhouette. The guitar players rush the front of the stage, and the entire band bursts into "The Heart of Rock 'n' Roll" as Huey bows to the audience. Cameras soak up the show from over, under, and around the musicians. Before you have time to wish for another vantage, you're there. Every R&B-de-

rived organ fill, every calloused—if not blistering—guitar break, and every pouting curl on Huey's lip jumps onscreen for your inspection.

The performance doesn't lack visual or aural appeal, but even a party band like the News occasionally ought to rise beyond the it's-all-right-because-I-say-it's-all-right chain reaction. When Lewis tackles a topical subject—as in "Walking on a Thin Line," a song exploring the frustration of an ignored boy-next-door turned ignored Vietnam vet—the lyrics come out of his mouth sounding old before their time. Happily, Lewis can depend on "I Want a New Drug" to slow the avalanche of vapidly.

Still, Huey and his band execute their repertoire with energy and skill. They're not adventurous but they roll down even the most well-worn musical roads without getting rutbound. You can tap your foot, you can hum along, you can even guess what he's going to say next. You know him. You love him.

—Andrew Roblin

**'Weird Al' Yankovic:  
The Compleat Al**

Color. 1985. Dir. Jay Levey & Robert K. Weiss. 97 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

Satire attacks evil and stupidity through wit; parody, on the other hand, just mimics a style. Some people thus dismiss rock parodist "Weird Al" Yankovic simply because he is a parodist and not a satirist, and heavens-to-Bloomingtondale's, rock & roll can sure use someone to cut through the dross. But as the accordion-playing Yankovic lets us know right away in this comic semi-biography, it ain't him. Or is it?

As it turns out, this inspired gumbo of eight video clips mixed into a "documentary" narrative does have its courageous side. Anyone with even a passing knowledge of how the music business operates knows it can be dangerous to anger powerful people, not least of all those with (how do they put it?) "reputed mob connections." Yankovic's spoof of his own Scotti





Brothers management as the shady "Ron-zoni Brothers" shows a streak that might yet get his feet into concrete either in front of Grauman's Chinese Theatre or at the bottom of the East River. Al also pokes fun at powerful rock stars' funny costumes, be they Billy Idol's leathers or Bruce Springsteen's so-calculated workingman's look.

Yet the Al portrayed onscreen seems more a Harold Lloyd innocent, walking bewilderedly through life's perpetual traumas with his accordion held high. Al the comedian/conceptualist is far different. The visual gags of "Eat It," "I Lost on Jeopardy," and "Like a Surgeon" are too well-timed, too well-paced to have been the result of casual thought; the clincher, though, has to be the more-Devo-than-Devo brilliance of "Dare to Be Stupid," a horrible song anchoring (now get this straight) an on-target parody of the celebrated rock satirists.

*The Compleat Al* still runs a little longer than it should; the 60-minute cable version (*The Incomplete Al?*) moves along more briskly. In any case, this tape proves that Yankovic can dare to be stupid and make it funny—not an easy task. Ask Jerry Lewis.

—Frank Lovece

## Messiah

*Color. 1983. Carolyn Watkinson, Judith Nelson, Academy of Ancient Music, Choir of Westminster Abbey; Christopher Hogwood, cond. Dir. Roy Tipping. 145 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.*

George Frederick Handel's *Messiah*, points out conductor Christopher Hogwood in his witty introduction, is almost never heard today as Handel wrote it. It was scored for by an orchestra of no more than about 35 pieces plus an all-male choir of about 25, with five soloists. As an avid *Messiah* listener I must admit he's right. Before viewing this tape I had never heard a *Messiah* played by fewer than twice that number or done with male altos and boy sopranos.

Of course the question is, what's the difference? Judging from this, it can mean plenty. Hogwood makes a powerful case with the quiet drama of his interpretation; the transparency and delicacy he attains seem unthinkable if done by a larger ensemble, and the individual voices (of both instruments and singers) gain a clarity and balance usually overwhelmed by larger forces. Still, I couldn't help missing the power of a big choir during such numbers as the Hallelujah Chorus or "And the glory of the Lord"—I am tempted to suggest that even if Handel didn't ever get Wagnerian in these choruses, he would have if he had known how stirring they can be.

I was particularly stirred by Carolyn Watkinson (contralto). She has the most dramatic texts to sing and her intensity and technique are both thrilling. Also effective are Judith Nelson (soprano 1) and Paul Elliott, whose very lyric tenor is well-suited to this work. Both Emma Kirkby (soprano 2) and David Thomas (bass) are a bit erratic.

The recording seems to have used sev-

eral different stereo setups while the visual plot remains constant—a bit disorienting. Otherwise the sound is very good and the visual direction tasteful and un gimmicky, featuring appropriate statuary and decor from Westminster Abbey, where the program was recorded and filmed.

—M. George Stevenson



## How to Teach Your Baby to Read

*Color. 1983. Glen Doman, Janet Doman, Susan Aisen; dir. Chris Shanaberg. 77 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Video Associates (5419 Sunset Blvd., L.A., Calif. 90027).*

Now hear this! "Every child born, at the instant of birth, has a higher potential intelligence than Leonardi DaVinci." Whew. This mixture of docu-drama and hard-sell is hosted by Glen Doman. Doman is absolutely sure that toddlers everywhere can zip through words and sentences (and eventually books and encyclopedias) before they enter school. The trick of the tale, according to Doman, is all contained in the video and book (packaged together). What yuppie parent could resist a pitch like this?

Doman, who resembles a cross between John Huston and Dr. Seuss, spends a good portion of the tape discussing the hows and whys of his teaching method as he strolls through spacious gardens and stately libraries. The Doman approach ("it's all in the book") suggests that kids can learn how to read before they can walk or talk. For the disbelieving and skeptical, Doman shows snippets of interaction between mothers and toddlers. The moms are holding up strips of white cardboard signs with words in large print. The toddlers appear to be alert and interested in their reading lessons. Are they reading and repeating these words to themselves silently or are they merely eyeballing the flashy red squiggly lines?

Before you can say "Jack Robinson" (or read it) Doman is striding across an open field, giving you the basics of his philosophy. Mothers are the best teachers of reading. Start teaching your child to read

as soon as possible. Select words that have "real" meaning to your child and print them on strips of cardboard (good words are "spaghetti" and "refrigerator"; bad words are "see," "Spot," "run"). Again, the Doubting Thomas is shown scene after scene of industrious tykes (most of them under six) whipping through homemade textbooks and classics. The kids, for the most part, seem to be able to handle many difficult words with minimal prompting.

Perhaps the core of Doman's message is that you can teach your youngsters practically anything if you are willing to devote the necessary time and effort toward your learning goal. Be joyous, Glen Doman emphasizes, when you teach your little bairn. I tried to be just that when I gave my 15-month-old a cardboard strip of paper with the word "cornflakes" printed on it. He took one look and began to nibble away on it.

—T.J. McGrath

## Nudes in Limbo

*Color. 1983. 53 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MCA.*

## The Secret World of Erotic Art

*Color. 1985. Peggy O'Brien, Tom Nolan. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Vestron.*

Where have the creators of these videos been for the last 20 years? Up in the attic with a box of nudist magazines? Whatever their inspiration, these two "erotic" video programs seem to be aimed at the swinger that time forgot.

*Nudes in Limbo* is so bland it doesn't have a core. An interminable pastiche of artsy heavily shadowed shapes that could be anything from breasts to behinds are intercut with both male and female jock types having a good old-fashioned nude workout on the home Nautilus. If they'd had VCRs in the '60s, guys named Vic might've bought this video just so they could have it casually flickering in the background when their dates turned up. But unless you've got a tank of goldfish you'd like to really pamper, *Nudes in Limbo* deserves to remain true to its title.

And if *Nudes* didn't work its magic for our swinger friend, *The Secret World of Erotic Art* may well be what he would've consoled himself with after he struck out. To grasp the concept of this *Penthouse* project, imagine two fully clothed refugees from a porno film poring over a coffeetable collection of erotic art. You have your Picasso, your Toulouse-Lautrec, your various Dutch masters, and then you have an army of rutting Japanese depicted in a plethora of awkward positions. Our hosts also pass around the odd jade marital aid and what passes for erotic folk art with commentary so stultifyingly inane that one almost yearns for the simple muzak of *Nudes in Limbo*.

She: "Have you ever fantasized about making it with an animal?" He: "No—well, do whales count?" Yeah, they count the tiles on the ceiling when stuff like this is on television. Say goodnight, Gracie.

—John Walker



# QUICK TAKES/VIDEO

## A Walt Disney Christmas A Disney Christmas Gift

Color. Compiled 1982. Animated. 46/47 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95 ea. Disney.

Disney's real Yuletide gift to videophiles is *Pinocchio* at \$29.95, but the 50 bucks saved leave plenty of room for one of these seasonal video desserts. *A Walt Disney Christmas* is the better buy, containing as it does one of the more bizarre Silly Symphonies ("Santa's Workshop") as well as the exploits of Mickey, Pluto, and most memorably Donald ("Donald's Snow Fight"). The only glaring concession to pure sappiness is "Once Upon a Wintertime," which unfortunately is reprised in *A Disney Christmas Gift* along with "Pluto's Christmas Tree." Despite two additional shorts plus some snips from *Bambi*, *The Sword in the Stone*, *Peter Pan*, and *Cinderella* (all otherwise still in the vaults), this second tape whets the appetite without really satisfying it. —Mark Fleischmann

## Rock & Roll Disciples

Color. 1985. Dir. Thomas Corboy. 28 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Monticello Productions (1822 Easterly Terrace, L.A., Calif. 90026; 213-662-2938).

Here's a pungent, fascinating peek at selected members of the cult that is Elvis Presley. Director Corboy has shuffled interviews with an Elvis impersonator, two twins who are positively convinced that they are the secret daughters of Elvis (their mother never said they *weren't*), and a middle-aged woman whose obsession has manifested itself in everything from divorce (grounds: "excessive devotion to Elvis Presley") to burying her murdered daughter with a copy of "Burning Love" in her hands. Though Corboy doesn't flinch or condescend, the unblinking focus of this brief documentary does give it an unintentionally ghoulish tinge. Still, rarely has such mania been so coolly observed.

—John Walker

## Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra

Color. 1983. 55 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Sony.

The latest Jazz at the Smithsonian release is highlighted by a crisp well-paced set from drummer Lewis leading a 17-piece big band comprised mostly of young players. The large-format band seems to have taxed the Smithsonian's usually meticulous recording gear. While the large brass section is well-balanced, the bass is overrecorded and the piano buried in what admittedly must have been a difficult mix. The best moments are Herbie Hancock's "Dolphin Dance" and the show-closing "Eye of the Hurricane."

—John Swenson



## Johnny Maddox Plays Ragtime

Color. 1985. Johnny Maddox, various boozers; dir. Paul Gitelson. 55 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.

Don't breathe the phrase "ragtime revival" to pianist Johnny Maddox; he sold a million records of "The Crazy Otto Medley" 15 years before Joshua Rifkin took a fine-arts approach to Scott Joplin. Here Maddox bangs out not only Joplin but ragged-up classical themes, waltzes, and gilded-era pop songs. Unfortunately for ragtime purists, he's playing an upright with hardened hammers that make a rinky-tink sound; Maddox also wavers in tempo at his usual breakneck pace. The club audience on this live tape doesn't seem to care (or notice). If you're into athletic events more than musical appreciation, you won't either.

—Scott Isler

## The Cars Live 1984-1985

Color. 1984. Dir. Larry Jordan. 59 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Vestron.

Despite their fine and successful records, the Cars have always been dull in concert. On this arena show videotaped in Houston, the Boston quintet shows no enthusiasm (with the partial exception of guitarist Elliot Easton) and barely acknowledges the audience. They go about the business of performing with the emotional detachment of surgeons, doing an efficient job without breaking a sweat. Onstage TV screens displaying meaningless light-show level graphics only underscore the band's visual shortcomings. The 13 songs include many hits ("You Might Think," "Drive," "Let's Go," "Just What I Needed," "Good Times Roll"), but omit tunes Cars fans might want to hear. Fast rhythmic editing and occasional electronic effects improve the band's reserved live work by relating it to their more engaging and imaginative promo clips.

—Ira Robbins

## Maurice Sendak's 'Really Rosie'

Color. 1983. Animated short. Dir. Sendak; music Carole King. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. CC Studios (Weston, Conn. 06883; 203-226-4666).

With frolicking child in lap, I settled

down to watch Rosie and the Nutshell Kids jump, hoot, and holler their way through a series of bumbling screentests for the upcoming blockbuster *Whatever Happened to Chicken Soup?* Sendak, premier kids' picture-book author and illustrator, and tunesmith/singer King have put together a bouncy and street-smarty animated musical. Rosie, an insufferable ham who flounces around in a fluffy boa and cocktail dress, delivers some zingers to the other little whelps, e.g. "Stupid boys make me nervous." It's all in good fun, however, as Rosie and the Nutshellers parade through alphabet skits, counting sketches, and morality scenes.

—T.J. McGrath

## Let's Go to the Zoo

Color. 1985. Bob Keeshan, Hugh Brannum, Cosmo Allegretti; dir. Jim Hirschfeld, Peter Birch. 58 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Maljack/MPI.

Very young children are the target for *Let's Go to the Zoo*, another installment in Bob Keeshan's Captain Kangaroo Video Showcase series. As he has for over 20 years, Keeshan as the Captain mixes the educational with the silly, bringing a child-like sense of wonder to everything he does as he and his cohorts (most notably Hugh Brannum as Mr. Greenjeans and Cosmo Allegretti as a moronic sidekick named Dennis) feed and discuss zoo animals in New Jersey, California, and New York. They are aided by (at times a bit grainy) film footage of animals in their natural habitat and by didactic songs. Though adults might find the Captain's singsong delivery trying at times, kids will probably enjoy the show—and may even learn something too.

—Tom Soter

## Wally's Workshop: Painting & Staining

Color. 1985. Wally & Natalie Bruner. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$9.95. Kartes.

Ever wanted to give new life to old toys? Match woodgrain on different pieces of furniture? Paint a wall in one-tenth the time it normally takes? Then check out this no-nonsense look at painting and wood-staining—it could put the old-fashioned do-it-yourself manual out of business. Wally Bruner, former host of TV's *What's My Line?*, is the crisp and efficient guide, hardly waiting for the camera to keep up with him as he paints rooms, sprays stools, and repaints children's toys on a revolving platform. Wife Natalie, knowledgeable but slightly befuddled, watches in awe as Wally demonstrates the basics of spraying, roller-painting, and staining wood. VHS quality is as fine-grained as the work onscreen.

—Tom Soter



# DIRECTORY

## New Releases on Tape and Disc

The biggest news in home video this month is without doubt Disney's reissue of *Pinocchio*, *Dumbo*, and 19 other grade-A titles for an incredibly low \$29.95. For what it might cost to take the family to a couple of matinees, you can own two of the greatest animated features ever produced, viewing them forward, backward, in slow-motion and freeze frame to your heart's content. With price reductions like these, the question for the average video consumer may soon be not "Why buy when you can rent?" but "Why rent when you can buy?"

Space limits do not allow for complete "Directory" entries on Disney's reissues—there's too much new material out there—but for the record, the remainder of the list includes *Robin Hood*, *Mary Poppins*, *Old Yeller*, *Pete's Dragon*, *The Love Bug*, *Herbie Rides Again*, *Herbie Goes Bananas*, *Herbie Goes to Monte Carlo*, *Tron*, *The Black Hole*, *Swiss Family Robinson*, *Treasure Island*, *Pollyanna*, *Mickey's Christmas Carol*, *A Walt Disney Christmas*, *A Disney Christmas Gift*, *The Gnome-Mobile*, *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*, and *Babes in Toyland* (whew!). Also available with the purchase of any Disney cassette, on sale or not, is a half-hour compilation of live-action and cartoon highlights entitled *The Walt Disney Comedy and Magic Revue*. It lists for a paltry \$9.95.

On the major-motion-picture front, the lag time between theatrical release and home video release continues to shorten. This month, *Prizzi's Honor* and *The Emerald Forest* make their debuts close on the heels of successful theatrical runs. Also out are *Amadeus*, the most-awarded film of 1984, and *Ghostbusters*, the most profitable.

If you're tired of the same old Christmas specials on network TV, there's plenty of seasonal fare available on video. Thorn EMI/HBO brings you *Carols for Christmas* and *The Nutcracker*; MGM/UA releases the 1938 version of *A Christmas Carol*, with Reginald Owen, and a *Holiday Sing Along With Mitch*; *Winter*, an image-essay set to the music of Windham Hill recording artists, is available on tape from Paramount and on disc from Pioneer; and Family offers Chuck Jones's cartoon special *Very Merry Cricket*.

How-to-cook tapes abound in the Information section this month. *New York Times* food editor Craig Claiborne serves up his *Video Cookbook*, while Julia Child shows us *The Way to Cook* in six hour-long installments. Lynn Redgrave rounds out the list as hostess of the *Weight Watchers Guide to Dining and Cooking*. And if you eat too much turkey at holiday time, you can drop a few pounds with *Jane Fonda's New Workout*.

## ADVENTURE

**Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.** Color. 1985. Patrick Day, Sammi-Art Williams, Frederic Forrest, Sada Thompson, Lillian Gish, Richard Kiley, Geraldine Page, Barnard Hughes, Jim Dale. Boy and runaway slave travel down the Mississippi. 121 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$39.95. MCA.

**Allegheny Uprising.** B&W. 1939. John Wayne, Claire Trevor, George Sanders. Colonial rebels defy British army officer. 81 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**Back to Bataan.** B&W. 1945. John Wayne, Anthony Quinn, Beulah Bondi, Lawrence Tierney, Fely Franquelli, Richard Loo, Philip Ahn. Guerilla fighters liberate the Philippines from Japanese occupation. 95 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

**Captain Kongoroo's Favorite Adventure Stories.** Color. 1985. Bob Keeshan as Captain



The Emerald Forest

Kangaroo narrates "The Case of the Spilt Milk," "Mr. McFidget and His Midget Widget Factory," "Search for the Belt of Power," more. 58 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. MPI.

**Detroit 9000.** Color. 1973. Alex Rocco, Hari Rhodes, Scatman

Crothers, Vonetta McGee, Ella Edwards. Black cop, white partner pursue jewel thieves. 106 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Elephant Boy.** B&W. 1937. Sabu, W.E. Holloway, Allan Jeayes, Walter Hudd, Bruce Gor-

don, D.J. Williams. Young boy must gain respect of experienced hunters. 81 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**The Emerald Forest.** Color. 1985. Powers Boothe, Charley Boorman, Meg Foster, Rui Polonah, Dira Paes, Eduardo Conde; dir. John Boorman. Engineer loses son in Amazon jungle, finds him 10 years later. 113 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo, cl. cap.). \$79.95./LV (CX stereo, cl. cap.). \$34.95. Embassy.

**Falcon and the Snowmon.** Color. 1985. Sean Penn, Timothy Hutton. Young men traffic in national secrets. 131 min. (R) CED (stereo, closed captioned). \$29.95. Vestron.

**The Flight of the Phoenix.** Color. 1966. James Stewart, Richard Attenborough, Peter Finch, Hardy Kruger, Ernest Borgnine, Ian Banne, Ronald Fraser, Christian Marquand, Dan Duryea, George Kennedy. Plane-crash survivors stranded in the Sahara Desert. 147 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$59.98. CBS/Fox.



**Flying Leathernecks.** Color. 1951. John Wayne, Robert Ryan, Don Taylor, Janis Page. Tough air-squadron commander during struggle for Guadalcanal. 102 min. Beta, VHS. RKO.

**ffolkes.** Color. 1980. Roger Moore, James Mason, Anthony Perkins, Michael Parks, David Hédison, Jack Watson, Lea Brodie. Explosives expert attempts to defuse terrorist bombs planted on Atlantic oil rig. 99 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MCA.

**Gotcho!** Color. 1985. Anthony Edwards, Linda Fiorentino, Alex Rocco, Nick Corri. College sophomore traveling in Europe becomes target of espionage plot. 97 min. (PG-13) Beta (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi, cl. cap.). \$79.95./LV (cl. cap.). \$34.95. MVA.

**Heorts and Armour.** Color. 1983. Tanya Roberts, Tony Vogel, Leigh McCloskey, Barbara de Rossi, Rick Edwards, Ron Moss. Moorish princess captured by Christians. 121 min. (PG-13) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$69.95. Warner.

**Little Lord Fountleroy.** Color. 1980. Ricky Schroder, Alec Guinness, Eric Porter, Colin Blakely, Connie Booth, Rachel Kempson. TV adaptation of Frances Hodgson Burnett novel about poor youth who inherits grandfather's estate. 100 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$29.95. Family.

**Mr. Moto's Lost Warning.** B&W. 1939. Peter Lorre, Ricardo Cortez, Virginia Field, John Carradine, George Sanders, Robert Coote, John Davidson. Inscrutable sleuth uncovers plot to blow up French naval fleet. 70 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.

**Ordeal by Innocence.** Color. 1984. Donald Sutherland, Christopher Plummer, Faye Dunaway, Sarah Miles, Diana Quick, Annette Crosbie, Ian McShane, Michael Elphick. Key witness reopens matricide case. 91 min. (PG-13) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MGM/UA.

**Red Dust.** B&W. 1932. Clark Gable, Jean Harlow, Mary Astor, Donald Crisp, Gene Raymond, Tully Marshall, Willie Fung. Dashing plantation master attracts dizzy blonde, married woman. 83 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**The Red Light Sting.** Color. 1984. Farrah Fawcett, Beau Bridges, Harold Gould. Justice Department rookie sets up phony brothel to gather evidence on mobsters. 96 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$39.95. MCA.

**Rituols.** Color. 1978. Hal Holbrook, Lawrence Dane, Robin Gammell, Ken James, Gary Reineke. Doctors on wilderness vacation terrorized by unknown force. 100 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Sovoge Island.** Color. Linda Blair, Ajita Wilson, Christina Lai. Women prisoners forced to mine emeralds. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**The Scarlet Pimpernel.** B&W. 1935. Leslie Howard, Merle Oberon, Joan Gardner, Raymond Massey, Nigel Bruce, Anthony Bushell. Disguised nobleman rescues men from guillotine during French Revolution. 98 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Texas Detour.** Color. 1977. Patrick Wayne, Cameron Mitchell, Priscilla Barnes, Mitch Vogel, Lindsay Bloom. High-speed police chase. 92 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Prism.



**The Thief of Bogdod.** Color. 1940. Sabu, John Justin, June Duprez, Conrad Veidt, Rex Ingram, Miles Maleson, Mary Morris. Young native boy outwits evil magician. 106 min. LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**The Three Musketeers.** Color. 1948. Gene Kelly, Lana Turner, June Allyson, Van Heflin, Angela Lansbury, Robert Coote, Frank Morgan, Vincent Price, Keenan Wynn, Gig Young. Adaptation of Dumas novel: intrigue in court of King Louis XIII. 127 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Tycoon.** Color. 1947. John Wayne, Laraine Day, Cedrick Hardwicke, Judith Anderson, James Gleason, Anthony Quinn, Grant Withers. Engineer attempts to build a railroad through the Andes. 129 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. RKO.

## COMEDY

**Animol Crockers.** B&W. 1930. The Marx Brothers (Groucho, Chico, Harpo, Zeppo), Margaret Dumont, Lillian Roth, Louis Sorin, Hal Thompson, Robert Greig, Captain Spalding, the African ex-

plorer, lands stateside. 98 min. (G) LV (CX). \$34.95. MVA.

**Beoch Blonket Bingo.** Color. 1965. Frankie Avalon, Annette Funicello, Paul Lynde, Harvey Lembeck, Don Rickles, Linda Evans, Jody McCrea, Marta Kristen, John Ashley, Deborah Walley, Buster Keaton. Surfers and their girls catch waves and hang out. 96 min. (G) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**The Best of the Benny Hill Show, Volume 6.** Color. High-



lights from British comedian's TV series. 120 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Brewster's Millions.** Color. 1985. Richard Pryor, John Candy, Lonette McKee, Stephen Collins, Hume Cronyn; dir. Walter Hill. Down-and-out baseball player must spend \$30 million to inherit \$300 million. 101 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo surround, closed captioned). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo surr., cl. cap.). \$79.95. MCA.

**Cheoters.** Color. 1980. Peggy Cass, John Lansing, Patricia Barry, Jack Kruschen, Joseph Mussalo, Dawn Davis. Two middle-aged couples carry on criss-cross affairs. Taped at Detroit's Fisher Theater. 103 min. Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO.

**Cheech and Chong: Get Out of My Room.** Color. 1985. Cheech Marin, Thomas Chong, John Paragon, Beverly D'Angelo, Elvira, Evelyn Guerrero, Al Kooper, Jan-Michael Vincent, Dick Wilson, Mary Woronov. Four humorous music videos, including "Born in East L.A.," plus satirical look at filming of title song. 53 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi Stereo). \$29.95. MCA.

**Comedy Music Videos.** Color. 1985. 13 vignettes featuring Mel Brooks ("Hitler Rap"), John Candy and Eugene Levy as the Shmenges ("The Last Polka"), Dan Aykroyd and John Belushi as the Blues

Brothers ("Hey Bartender"), Eric Idle and the Rutles ("Piggie in the Middle"), others. 54 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Vestron.

**Deol: The Moking of "Let's Make a Deol."** Color. Behind the scenes look at TV game show, featuring bloopers and highlights. 84 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Active.

**Fanny Hill: Memoir of a Woman of Pleasure.** Color. 1983. Lisa Raines, Oliver Reed, Shelley Winters, Wilfred Hyde-White. English maiden's bawdy life story. 80 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MGM/UA.

**The Ghost Goes West.** B&W. 1936. Robert Donat, Jean Parker, Eugene Pallette, Elsa Lanchester; dir. Rene Clair. Castle and its resident spirit transplanted from Scotland to Florida. 82 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Ghostbusters.** Color. 1984. Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Harold Ramis, Sigourney Weaver, Rick Moranis, Annie Potts, Ernie Hudson, William Atherton. Trio of screwball researchers open a ghost removal service. 107 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

**Goodbye New York.** Color. 1985. Julie Hagerty. Woman bound for Paris winds up on a kibbutz in Israel. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Vestron.

**Groce Quigley.** Color. 1985. Katharine Hepburn, Nick Nolte, Elizabeth Wilson, Walter Abel, Chip Zien. Old woman hires hitman. 88 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MGM/UA.

**The Honeymooners: The Hidden Episodes Volume 1.** B&W. Jackie Gleason, Art Carney, Audrey Meadows, Joyce Randolph. Newly discovered "Honeymooners" sketches culled from episodes of *The Jackie Gleason Show*. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MPI.

**The Honeymooners: The Hidden Episodes Volume 2.** B&W. Jackie Gleason, Art Carney, Audrey Meadows, Joyce Randolph. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MPI.

**Hot Resort.** Color. 1985. Bronson Pinchot, Debra Kelly, Marcy Walker, Frank Gorshin, Linda Kenton. Beach hotel attracts amorous staff. 92 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MGM/UA.

**Idiot's Delight.** B&W. 1939. Norma Shearer, Clark Gable, Edward Arnold, Charles Coburn, Joseph Schildkraut, Virginia Grey, Burgess Meredith. Russian countess meets cynical hoover. 107 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**It Could Happen to You.** B&W. 1939. Stuart Erwin, Gloria Stuart, Raymond Walburn, Douglas Fowley. Meek ad-agency copywriter mixed up in murder case. 64 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.



**Jerry Lewis Live.** Color. 1985. Songs and jokes. Recorded in Las Vegas. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

**The Little Rascals Comedy Classics Vol. II.** B&W. Spanky, Alfalfa, Buckwheat and the gang in 6 shorts. 120 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Republic.

**Martin Mull Presents The History of White People in America.** Color. 1985. Martin Mull, Mary Kay Place, Fred Willard, Bob Eubanks, Marion Ross, Teri Garr. "Mockumentary" featuring a visit to the Institute for White Studies, commentary on "the white scene." 48 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$24.95. MCA.

**Monkey Business.** B&W. 1931. The Marx Brothers (Groucho, Chico, Harpo, Zeppo), Thelma Todd, Rockcliffe Fellowes, Ruth Hall, Harry Woods. Stowaways on luxury liner. 77 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MVA.

**Moving Violations.** Color. 1985. John Murray, Jennifer Tilly, James Keach, Wendie Jo Sperber, Sally Kellerman, Clara Peller, Fred Willard. Police-operated traffic school. 90 min. (PG-13) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

**My Dear Secretary.** B&W. 1948. Laraine Day, Kirk Douglas, Keenan Wynn, Helen Walker, Rudy Vallee, Florence Bates, Alan Mowbray, Irene Ryan. Secretary goes to work for novelist, becomes novelist herself. 94 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.

**Playing the Field.** Color. Joan Collins, Landon Buzzanca. Romance during an international soccer competition. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**Polyester.** Color. 1981. Divine (Glenn Milstead), Edith Massey, Tab Hunter, Mary Garlington, Ken King, Mink Stole, Stiv Bators; dir. John Waters. Unhappy housewife with delinquent kids meets slick drive-in owner. 86 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$69.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Prizzi's Honor.** Color. 1985. Jack Nicholson, Kathleen Turner, William Hickey, Anjelica Huston, John Randolph; dir. John Huston. Mafia hitman meets his match in female hired gun. 130 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Vestron.

**The Purple Rose of Coiro.** Color/B&W. 1985. Mia Farrow, Jeff Daniels, Danny Aiello, Stephanie Farrow, Zoe Caldwell, Edward Herrmann, Van Johnson, Dianne Wiest, John Wood; dir. Woody Allen. Matinee idol comes down from the screen. 84 min. (PG) CED (closed captioned). \$29.95. Vestron.

**Quoxxer Fortune Has a Cousin in the Bronx.** Color. 1970. Gene Wilder, Margot Kidder, Eileen Colgen, Seamus Ford. Coed studying in Ireland falls in love with fertilizer salesman. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. United.

**Rustlers' Rhapsody.** Color. 1985. Tom Berenger, B.W. Bailey, Marilu Henner, Fernando Rey, Andy Griffith. Sendup of B-movie Westerns. 89 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo, cl. cap.). \$79.95./LV (CX stereo, cl. cap.). \$29.95. Paramount.

**Secret Admirer.** Color. 1985. C. Thomas Howell. Girl's amorous letter repeatedly falls into wrong hands. 98 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**The Secret Life of Walter Mitty.** Color. 1947. Danny Kaye, Virginia Mayo, Boris Karloff, Fay Bainter, Ann Rutherford, Florence Bates, Thurston Hall. Chronic daydreamer becomes involved in real-life adventure. 110 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95./LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**The Thin Man.** B&W. 1934. William Powell, Myrna Loy, Maureen O'Sullivan, Nat Pendleton, Minna Gombell, Cesar Romero, Natalie Moorhead, Edward Ellis, Porter Hall. Husband/wife detectives Nick and Nora Charles investigate disappearance of wealthy inventor. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.



Rustler's Rhapsody

**Witches' Brew.** Color. 1980. Teri Garr, Richard Benjamin, Lana Turner, Kathryn Leigh Scott, Jordan Charney, Kelly Jean Peters. Professor's wife uses sorcery to advance husband's career. 98 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

## DRAMA

**Amadeus.** Color. 1984. F. Murray Abraham, Tom Hulce, Elizabeth Berridge, Jeffrey Jones; dir. Milos Forman. Jealous 18th-century composer Salieri tries to undermine genius of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Choreography by Twyla Tharp. 158 min. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$79.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**The Babysitter.** Color. 1980. Patty Duke Astin, William Shatner, Quinn Cummings, David Wallace, Stephanie Zimbalist, John Houseman. Mysterious girl causes problems for family. 100 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Barn Burning.** Color. 1980. Tommy Lee Jones, Diane Dagan, Shawn Whittington. From William Faulkner's short story; originally produced for public TV. 40 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**The Battleship Potemkin.** B&W. 1925. Alexander Antonov, Vladimir Barsky, Grigori Alexandrov, Mikhail Goronov; dir. Sergei Eisenstein. Landmark Russian film produced to commemorate 1905 revolution. 66 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.

**Blood Simple.** Color. 1985. John Getz, Frances McDormand, Dan Hedaya, Samm-Art Williams, M. Emmet Walsh; dir. Ethan Coen. Husband's jealousy leads to series of killings. 96 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$79.95./LV. \$34.98. MCA.

**The Breakfast Club.** Color. 1985. Emilio Estevez, Paul Gleason, Anthony Michael Hall, Judd Nelson, Molly Ringwald, Ally Sheedy; dir. John Hughes. High-

school detention group. 92 min. (R) LV (CX, closed captioned). \$34.95. MCA.

**Camila.** Color. 1984. Susu Pecoraro, Imanol Arias, Hector Alterio, Mona Maris. Illicit romance between Jesuit priest and Buenos Aires socialite. 105 min. Beta, VHS (dubbed or subtitled). \$59.95. Embassy.

**Cry Ponc.** Color. 1974. John Forsythe, Earl Holliman, Ralph Meeker, Anne Francis, Claudia McNeil, Norman Alden. Businessman kills drunk pedestrian in car accident, finds body has disappeared. 100 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

**David Copperfield.** B&W. 1935. Freddie Bartholomew, Frank Lawton, W.C. Fields, Lionel Barrymore, Madge Evans, Roland Young, Basil Rathbone, Edna May Oliver, Maureen O'Sullivan, Lewis Stone, Lennox Pawle; dir. George Cukor. Orphaned boy makes his way in the world. 131 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Deja Vu.** Color. 1984. Jaclyn Smith, Nigel Terry, Shelley Winters, Claire Bloom. Lovers suspect they are reincarnated. 95 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MGM/UA.

**Dishonored Lady.** B&W. 1947. Hedy Lamarr, Dennis O'Keefe, John Loder, William Lundigan, Morris Carnovsky, Natalie Schaffer, Paul Cavanagh; dir. Robert Stevenson. Woman art director charged with murdering former lover. 82 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.

**Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.** B&W. 1941. Spencer Tracy, Ingrid Bergman, Lana Turner, Donald Crisp, Barton MacLane, C. Aubrey Smith, Sara Allgood; dir. Victor Fleming. Scientist's experiments create evil alter-ego. 113 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Equus.** Color. 1977. Richard Burton, Peter Firth, Colin Blakely, Joan Plowright, Harry Andrews, Eileen Atkins, Jenny Agutter; dir. Sidney Lumet. Psychiatrist probes bizarre case involving troubled stable boy; adapted from Peter Shaffer's play. 138 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. MGM/UA.



The Untouchables: The Hidden Episodes



**The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.** Color. 1961. Glenn Ford, Ingrid Thulin, Charles Boyer, Lee J. Cobb, Paul Henreid, Paul Lukas, Yvette Mimieux, Karl Boehm; dir. Vincent Minnelli. Family members support opposing sides during WWII. 154 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**The Gold Key.** Color/B&W. 1985. Ray Milland stars in viewer-participation murder mystery featuring clips from his past films. Viewers who solve case are eligible to win \$100,000. 75 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Grambling's White Tiger.** Color. 1981. Bruce Jenner, LeVar Burton, Harry Belafonte. Docudrama about first white football player to attend all-black Grambling University. 98 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$39.95. MCA.

**I See a Dark Stranger.** B&W. 1947. Deborah Kerr, Trevor Howard, Raymond Huntley, Liam Redmond, Harry Webster. Irish girl sides against the English during WWII. 112 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VidAmerica.

**Imitation of Life.** Color. 1959. Lana Turner, John Gavin, Sandra Dee, Dan O'Herlihy, Susan Kohner, Robert Alda, Juanita Moore, Mahalia Jackson, Troy Donahue; dir. Douglas Sirk. Driven actress and her housekeeper, both estranged from their daughters. 124 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MCA.

**The Jilting of Granny Weatherall.** Color. 1980. Geraldine Fitzgerald, Lois Smith, William Sweetland. From Katherine Ann Porter's short story; originally produced for public TV. 57 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**The Joan Collins Video Selection: The Carpetbaggers.** Color. 1964/1985. George Peppard, Alan Ladd, Carroll Baker, Bob Cummings, Martha Hyer, Lew Ayres, Martin Balsam, Audrey Togger, Archie Moore; introduction by Joan Collins. Ruthless plane tycoon forges an empire. From Harold Robbins's novel. 150 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Paramount.

**The Joan Collins Video Selection: Jacqueline Susann's Once Is Not Enough.** Color. 1975/1985. Kirk Douglas, Alexis Smith, David Janssen, Deborah Raffin, George Hamilton, Melina Mercouri, Brenda Vaccaro; introduction by Joan Collins. Young girl infatuated with her father. 121 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Paramount.

**The Joan Collins Video Selection: The Last Tycoon.** Color. 1977/1985. Robert DeNiro, Tony Curtis, Robert Mitchum, Jeanne Moreau, Jack Nicholson, Donald Pleasence, Peter Strauss, Ingrid Boulting, Ray Milland, Dana An-

draws, Theresa Russell, John Caradine; dir. Elia Kazan, from Harold Pinter screenplay. Big-studio politics in early days of Hollywood. Introduction by Joan Collins. 123 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Paramount.

**Julius Caesar.** Color. 1970. Charlton Heston, Jason Robards, John Gielgud, Richard Johnson, Robert Vaughan, Diana Rigg, Richard Chamberlain, Christopher Lee. Shakespeare's tragedy about assassination of Roman leader. 117 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Republic.

**Just the Way You Are.** Color. 1984. Kristy McNichol. Hand-



icapped woman falls in love with ski instructor. 96 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MGM/UA.

**Knute Rockne—All American.** B&W. 1940. Pat O'Brien, Gale Page, Ronald Reagan, Donald Crisp, Albert Bassermann, John Qualen. Hollywood bio of famed Notre Dame football coach. Includes "Gipper" speech cut from TV prints. 84 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MGM/UA.

**The Little Red Schoolhouse.** B&W. 1936. Frank Coghlan Jr., Dickie Moore, Ann Doran, Lloyd Hughes, "Corky." Country boy quits school for city life. 64 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.

**The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg.** Color. 1980. Robert Preston, Fred Gwynne, Frances Sternhagen, Tom Aldredge; dir. Ralph Rosenblum. From Mark Twain's short story; originally produced for public TV. 40 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

**Martin's Day.** Color. 1985. Richard Harris, Justin Henry, Lindsay Wagner, James Coburn, Karen Black, John Ireland. Friendship between aging convict and lonely boy. 99 min. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

**Min and Bill.** B&W. 1930. Marie Dressler, Wallace Beery, Dorothy Jordan, Marjorie Rambeau, Frank

McGlynn. Waterfront hotel proprietress struggles to retain custody of adopted daughter. 66 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Mr. Ace.** B&W. 1946. George Raft, Sara Haden, Stanley Ridges, Jerome Cowan, Sylvia Sidney, Alan Edwards. Congresswoman runs for office without support of powerful mobster. 85 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.95. Sony.

**Nefertite, Queen of the Nile.** Color. Jeanne Crain, Vincent Price. Love story set in ancient Egypt. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Lightning.

**Savage Streets.** Color. 1983. Linda Blair. High-school coed turns vigilante. 93 min. CED. \$29.95. Vestron.

**Scarface.** B&W. 1932. Paul Muni, Ann Dvorak, George Raft, Boris Karloff, Karen Morley, Vince Barnett, Osgood Perkins, C. Henry Gordon; dir. Howard Hawks. Gangster's life and times. Includes alternate finale imposed by the Hays Office for initial re-



lease, along with original Hawks ending. 102 min. LV (CX). \$34.95. MCA.

**The Secret Adversary.** Color. Francisca Annis and James Warwick portray sleuths Tuppence Cowley and Tommy Beresford in this pilot for British TV series *Partners in Crime*. Based on characters created by Agatha Christie. 120 min. Beta, VHS. Pacific.

**The Seventh Seal.** B&W. 1956. Max von Sydow, Gunnar Bjornstrand, Nils Poppe, Bibi Andersson, Bengt Ekerot; dir. Ingmar Bergman. Medieval knight encounters Death on journey home from the crusades. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Slightly Honorable.** B&W. 1940. Pat O'Brien, Edward Arnold, Broderick Crawford, Ruth Terry, Eve Arden. Lawyer investigates role of corrupt political boss in suspicious deaths. 75 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.

**Stick.** Color. 1985. Burt Reynolds, George Segal, Candice Bergen, Charles Durning; dir. Burt Reynolds. Ex-con goes after ring of criminals who want him dead. 109 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo surround, closed captioned). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo surr., cl. cap.). \$79.95./LV (CX stereo surr., cl. cap.). \$34.95. MCA.

**Waterloo Bridge.** B&W. 1940. Vivien Leigh, Robert Taylor, Lucille Watson, Virginia Field, Maria Ouspenskaya, C. Aubrey Smith. Soldier and ballerina meet during air raid, fall in love. 109 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Wise Blood.** Color. 1979. Brad Dourif, Ned Beatty, Harry Dean Stanton, Dan Shor, Amy Wright, Mary Nell Santacrose; dir. John



Huston. Grandson of stern preacher founds his own anti-church; adaptation of Flannery O'Connor's novel. 106 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MCA.

## FANTASY and SCI-FI

**Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp.** Color. 1984. Valerie Bertinelli, Robert Carradine, James Earl Jones, Leonard Nimoy. Boy combats evil magician with help of genie. From Shelley Duvall's cable TV series *Faerie Tale Theatre*. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). \$39.98. CBS/Fox.

**Beany and Cecil Volume 9.** Color. Animated; dir. Robert Clampett. Beany, Cecil, Dishonest John, Captain Huff 'n Puff in "The Warring '20s," "Ain't That a Cork in the Snorkle," "So What and the Seven Whatnots," 3 more. 45 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$24.95. Magic.

**Betty Boop Special Collector's Edition Vol. II.** B&W. Animated. Compilation of Fleischer studio shorts featuring Betty, Koko the Clown, Bimbo. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Republic.

**Bible Stories: Tales from the Old Testament.** Color. 1985. Animated. Anthology produced by Video Japonica. 60 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Children's.

**Captain America.** Color. 1985. Animated. "The Origin of Captain America," "The Capture of Captain America." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism.

**Captain Kangaroo and the Right Thing to Do.** Color. 1985. Bob Keeshan as Captain Kangaroo narrates stories about the importance of moral values. 58 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. MPI.

**Challenge of the Gabots: Volume 1.** Color. 1985. Animated. Tie-in with children's toy; produced by Hanna-Barbera. Two adventures: "Time Wars," "Cy-Kill's Shrinking Ray." 48 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Children's.

**Challenge of the Gabots: Volume 2.** Color. 1985. Animated; produced by Hanna-Barbera. "Trident's Triple Threat," "Doppleganger." 48 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Children's.

**Challenge of the Gabots: Volume 3.** Color. 1985. Animated; produced by Hanna-Barbera. "Invasion from the 21st Level," "Gameworld." 48 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Children's.

**A Christmas Carol.** B&W. 1938. Reginald Owen, Gene Lockhart,

Kathleen Lockhart, Terry Kilburn, Leo G. Carroll. Dickens adaptation: miser redeemed by three ghosts. 70 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MGM/UA.

**The Devil and Daniel Webster.** B&W. 1941. Edward Arnold, Walter Huston, James Craig, Anne Shirley, Jane Darwell, Simone Simon, Gene Lockhart. Young farmer signs seven-year contract with the devil, reneges when time is almost up. Score by Bernard Herrmann. 109 min. (restored version) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Doctor De Soto and Other Stories.** Color. Animated. "Dr. De Soto": Award-winning children's film about mouse dentist who treats crafty fox; based on William Steig's book. Also includes "Curious George Rides a Bike," "The Hat," "Patrick." Beta, VHS \$29.95. CC.

**Fahrenheit 451.** Color. 1966. Julie Christie, Oskar Werner, Cyril Cusack, Anton Diffring, Jeremy Spenser, Alex Scott; dir. Francois Truffaut. Futuristic society where books are illegal. From the Ray Bradbury novel. 112 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MCA.

**The Fantastic Four.** Color. 1985. Animated. "The Impossible Man," "Spider-Man Meets Dr. Noah Boddy," "The Fabulous Farkir." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism.



**Fozzie's Muppet Scrapbook.** Color. 1985. Fozzie reviews his finest moments from *Muppet Show* TV series. With guests Milton Berle, Beverly Sills, Raquel Welch. 56 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$59.98. Playhouse.

**Goldie and Kids.** Color. 1982. Goldie Hawn hosts program exploring children's views on love, marriage, sex, separation, and divorce via dialogues, comedy sketches, musical sequences. With guest Barry Manilow. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Prism.

**The Grinch Grinches The Cat in the Hat/Pontoffel Pack.** Col-

or. 1982/1979. Animated. "Grinch": The Cat gives the Grinch a lesson in amiability. "Pontoffel": Gloomy young fellow develops self-confidence. From stories by Dr. Seuss. 49 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). \$29.98. Playhouse.

**Halloween is Grinch Night.** Color. 1977. Animated. Young Hoo saves Hooville from the Grinch's nasty pranks. 25 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). \$19.98. Playhouse.

**Heathcliff and Cats & Co. Volume 2.** Color. Animated. Heathcliff and the Catillac Cats in "Mad Dog Catcher," "Circus Berserkus," "Rebel Without a Claws," "The Farming Life Ain't for Me." 45 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$24.95. Magic.

**The Hugga Bunch.** Color. 1985. Animated. Tie-in with Hallmark children's dolls: characters demonstrate fun and value of hugging. 48 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Children's.

**The Incredible Hulk.** Color. 1985. Animated. "When Monsters Meet," "The One-Eyed Idol," "Fifth Avenue Phantom." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism.

**Iron Man.** Color. 1985. Animated. "The Hands of the Mandarin," "The Winged Thing," "Conner's

Reptiles." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism.

**Ladyhawke.** Color. 1985. Matthew Broderick, Rutger Hauer, Michelle Pfeiffer, Leo McKern, John Wood, Ken Hutchison; dir. Richard Donner. Medieval lovers thwarted by curse. 121 min. (PG-13) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). \$79.95./LV (CX stereo, cl. cap.). \$39.98. Warner.

**Mad Monster Party.** Color. 1967. Animated puppets; featuring voices of Phyllis Diller, Boris Karloff, Gale Garnett, Ethel Ennis. Doctor Frankenstein decides to retire, calls friends together to choose successor. 94 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.

**The Mighty Thor.** Color. 1985. Animated. "Enter Hercules," "Neptune's Nose Cone." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism.

**Muppet Moments.** Color. 1985. Kermit and Fozzie host highlights from *Muppet Show* TV series, with guests Pearl Bailey, Lena Horne, Liza Minnelli, Bernadette Peters, Zero Mostel, Andy Williams. 56 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$59.98. Playhouse.

**The Pied Piper of Hamelin.** Color. 1984. Eric Idle; dir. Nicholas Meyer. Piper rides town of rats. From Shelley Duvall's cable TV series *Faerie Tale Theatre*. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). \$39.98. CBS/Fox.

**Rip Van Winkle.** Color. 1984. Harry Dean Stanton, Talia Shire; dir. Francis Ford Coppola, music by Carmine Coppola. Man falls asleep in mysterious wood, awakens 20 years later. From Shelley Duvall's cable TV series *Faerie Tale Theatre*. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). \$39.98. CBS/Fox.

**The Raccoons Learn a Lesson.** Color. Animated. Two episodes: haunted house, car race. 50 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$29.95. Embassy.

**Robot Man and Friends.** Color. 1985. Animated. Adventures of cyborg characters, based on syndicated comic strip. 48 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Children's.

**Rowlf's Rhapsodies with the Muppets.** Color. 1985. Collection of musical highlights from *Muppet Show* TV series, with guests Marisa Berenson, George Burns, Petula Clark, Steve Martin, Peter Sellers. 55 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$59.98. Playhouse.

**Spider-Man.** Color. 1985. Animated. "The Origin of Spider-Man," "The Incredible Shrinking Spider-Man." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism.

**Spider-Woman.** Color. 1985. Animated. "Games of Doom," "Doctor Doom, Master of the World." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism.

**Sub-Mariner.** Color. 1985. Animated. "The Start of the Quest," "The Wrath of Sub-Mariner." 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Prism.

**Scary Tales and Silly Stories.** Color. 1985. Bob Keeshan as Captain Kangaroo. Spooky tales featuring Baron Von Frankenstein, Blinky the Clown, the Living Juke Box, Famous Amy. 58 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. MPI.

**She-Ra, The Princess of Power Volume 1.** Color. Animated. Two adventures with She-Ra, He-Man's twin sister. "The Missing Axe": She-Ra rescues kidnapped woodcutter. "The Crystal Castle": She-Ra convinces the King of the Trolls to trust humans. 45 min. Be-



ta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$24.95. Magic.

**Tales from Mother Goose and the World of Make Believe.** Color. 1985. Bob Keeshan as Captain Kangaroo narrates "Little Miss Muffet," "Jack and Jill," "Little Bo Peep," "Peter the Pumpkin Eater," more. 58 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. MPI.

**Voltron, Defender of the Universe: Castle of Lions.** Color. 1985. Animated. Full-length feature based on TV cartoon series. 83 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$49.95. Sony.

**The Walt Disney Comedy and Magic Revue.** Color. 1985. Live action/animated. Highlights from Disney films and cartoons including *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*, *The Absent-Minded Professor*, *The Happiest Millionaire*, *Pinocchio*, *Robin Hood*, *Return to Oz*, numerous shorts. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$9.95 (available only with purchase of another Disney cassette). Disney.

**The World of Strawberry Shortcake.** Color. Animated adventures featuring popular doll figures. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$29.95. Family.

## HORROR

**Bedlam.** B&W. 1946. Boris Karloff, Anna Lee, Ian Wolfe, Richard Fraser, Billy House, Jason Robards Sr. Asylum director has troublesome reform advocate committed. 79 min. Beta, VHS. Nostalgia.

**The Blood-Spattered Bride.** Color. 1969. Maribel Martin, Simon Andreu, Alexandra Bastedo, Dean Selmer, Montserrat Julio. Reincarnated murderess pursues newlyweds. 85 min. (mature) Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MPI.

**The Body Snatcher.** B&W. 1945. Henry Daniell, Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi, Edith Atwater, Russell Wade, Rita Corday; dir. Robert Wise. Doctor in need of bodies for research hires grave-robber. From Robert Louis Stevenson's story. 77 min. Beta, VHS. Nostalgia.

**Bride of Frankenstein.** B&W. 1935. Boris Karloff, Colin Clive, Elsa Lanchester, Valerie Hobson, Ernest Thesiger, Una O'Connor, Dwight Frye, John Carradine; dir. James Whale. Monster gains a mate. 75 min. LV (CX). \$34.95. MCA.

**The Brute Man.** B&W. 1946. Rondo Hatton, Jane Adams, Tom Neal, Donald McBride. Asylum escapee. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.95. Sony.

**Cat People.** B&W. 1942. Simone Simon, Kent Smith, Tom Conway,

Jack Holt, Jane Randolph; dir. Jacques Tourneur. Ancient curse turns woman into panther. 73 min. Beta, VHS. Nostalgia.

**Cat's Eye.** Color. 1985. Alan King, James Woods, Drew Barrymore, Kenneth McMillan, Robert Hays, Candy Clark. Trio of stories by Stephen King: man determined to quit smoking, tennis player involved in life-and-death bet, little girl tormented by troll. 94 min. (PG-13) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). \$79.98. Key.



**The Company of Wolves.** Color. 1984. Angela Lansbury, David Warner, Micha Bergese. Wise old granny narrates tales of lycanthropy. 95 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, cl. cap.). \$79.95. Vestron.

**Crucible of Terror.** Color. 1971. Mike Raven. Sculptor turns murdered models into living statuary. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

**The Curse of Frankenstein.** Color. 1957. Christopher Lee, Hazel Court, Robert Urquhart, Valerie Gaunt, Noel Hood. Hammer films adaptation of Mary Shelley novel: doctor creates living man from corpses. 83 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

**Curse of the Cat People.** B&W. 1944. Simone Simon, Kent Smith, Jane Randolph, Elizabeth Russell, Ann Carter, Julia Dean. Young girl has strange visions of father's first wife. 70 min. Beta, VHS. Nostalgia.

**Devil Bat's Daughter.** B&W. 1946. Rosemary La Plance, Michael Hale, John James, Molly Lamont, Ed Caddidy. Woman suspects her father may be a vampire. 66 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.95. Sony.

**The Evil.** Color. 1978. Richard Crenna, Joanna Pettet, Andrew Prine, Cassie Yates, Lynne Moody, Victor Buono, George O'Hanlon Jr. Psychologists convert old mansion into drug clinic, inadvertently unleash demonic forces. 90 min. (R) Beta, VHS.

\$39.95. Embassy.

**The Fog.** Color. 1980. Adrienne Barbeau, Jamie Lee Curtis, Hal Holbrook, Janet Leigh, John Houseman, Tommy Atkins, Nancy Loomis, Charles Cyphers; dir. John Carpenter. Shipwreck victims rise from the deep, invade nearby village. 90 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Embassy.

**Frankenstein '80.** Color. Monster pursues female victims. 90 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MPI.

**The Great Alligator.** Color. Barbara Bach, Mel Ferrer. Reptile

shal, Elisha Cook Jr., Carolyn Craig, Leona Anderson; dir. William Castle. Wealthy man offers group of strangers a fortune if they can last the night in his ominous mansion. 75 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$59.98. Key.

**I Walked with a Zombie.** B&W. 1943. Tom Conway, Frances Dee, James Ellison, Edith Barrett, Christine Gordon, Theresa Harris, James Bell; dir. Jacques Tourneur. Nurse finds voodoo is cause of patient's curious illness. 69 min. Beta, VHS. Nostalgia.

**Isle of the Dead.** B&W. 1945. Boris Karloff, Ellen Drew, Marc Cramer, Katherine Emery, Helene Thimig, Jason Robards. Quarantined island. 72 min. Beta, VHS. Nostalgia.

**Kiss of the Tarantula.** Color. 1972. Suzanne Ling, Eric Mason, Herman Wallner, Patricia Landon, Beverly Eddins. Teenage girl unleashes spiders against her enemies. 90 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MPI.

**The Leopard Man.** B&W. 1943. Dennis O'Keefe, Margo, Jean Brooks, Isabel Jewell, James Bell, Margaret Landry. Escaped leopard may or may not be culprit in series of killings. Beta, VHS. Nostalgia.

**Lifeforce.** Color. 1985. Steve Railsback, Peter Firth; dir. Tobe Hooper. Alien vampires come to Earth. 100 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Vestron.

**The Mummy.** B&W. 1932. Boris Karloff, Zita Johann, David Manners, Bramwell Fletcher, Arthur Byron, Edward Van Sloan, Noble Johnson. Archeologist accidentally resurrects embalmed Egyptian nobleman. 72 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. MCA.

**The Mummy.** Color. 1959. Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Eddie Byrne, Yvonne Furneaux, Felix Aylmer, Raymond Huntley. Hammer Films remake of Karloff classic. 88 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

on the loose. 90 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MPI.

**The Honeymoon Killers.** Color. 1970. Tony LoBianco, Shirley Stoler, Mary Jane Higby. Bizarre multiple-murder case. 103 min. \$69.95 (R) Beta, VHS. Vestron.

**Horror Hospital.** Color. Psychotic doctors. 90 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MPI.

**Horror of Dracula.** Color. 1958. Christopher Lee, Melissa Stribling, Michael Gough, Carol Marsh, John Van Eyssen, Valerie Gaunt, Miles Malleon. Hammer Films adaptation of Bram Stoker novel: professor hunts vampire. 81 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

**House on Haunted Hill.** B&W. 1958. Vincent Price, Carol Ohmart, Richard Long, Alan Mar-





**The Nesting.** Color. 1981. Robin Groves, Christopher Loomis, Michael David Lally, John Carradine, Gloria Grahame. Mystery authoress moves into haunted mansion. 104 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

**Night of the Bloody Apes.** Color. Armand Silva, Norma Lazar, Joe Elias. Transplanted ape heart gives human recipient a taste for blood. 85 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MPI.

**Night of the Zombies.** Color. 1981. Jamie Gillis. WWII POWs kept alive by experimental gas and diet of human flesh. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

**Night School.** Color. 1981. Rachel Ward, Leonard Mann, Drew Snyder, Joseph R. Sicari. Mystery killer beheads women at small college. 89 min. (R) Beta, VHS. (Hi-Fi). \$59.98. Key.

**The Orphan.** Color. 1979. Boy becomes withdrawn and hostile after death of parents. 80 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

**Rocce with the Devil.** Color. 1975. Peter Fonda, Warren Oates, Loretta Swit, Lara Parker, R.G. Armstrong. Two vacationing couples flee Satanist group after witnessing human sacrifice. 84 min. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captioned). \$59.98. Key.

**Saton's Blade.** Color. 1984. Rash of killings at remote mountain lodge. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

**Scream and Scream Again.** Color. 1970. Vincent Price, Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Judy Huxtable, Alfred Marks, Peter Sallis. Mad doctor bent on creating race of emotionless humans. 95 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Vestron.

**The Sentinel.** Color. 1977. Cristina Raines, Chris Sarandon, Martin Balsam, John Carradine, Jose Ferrer, Ava Gardner, Arthur Kennedy, Burgess Meredith, Sylvia Miles, Deborah Raffin, Eli Wallach, Christopher Walken. Model moves into brownstone, discovers gateway to Hell in attic. 92 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$39.95. MCA.

**Strangler from the Swamp.** B&W. 1946. Rosemary La Planche, Charles Middleton, Robert Barrat, Effie Parnell, Blake Edwards, Nolan Leary. Man hung for a murder he didn't commit returns from the grave. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Sony.

**Track of the Moon Beast.** Color. 1976. Chase Cordell, Donna Leigh Drake, Gregorio Sala, Patrick Wright. Meteor shower transforms mineralogist into blood-thirsty creature. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

**The Vampire Lovers.** Color. 1971. Ingrid Pitt, Pippa Steele, Madeleine Smith, Peter Cushing, George Cole, Dawn Addams, Kate

O'Mara. Lesbian vampires. 89 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

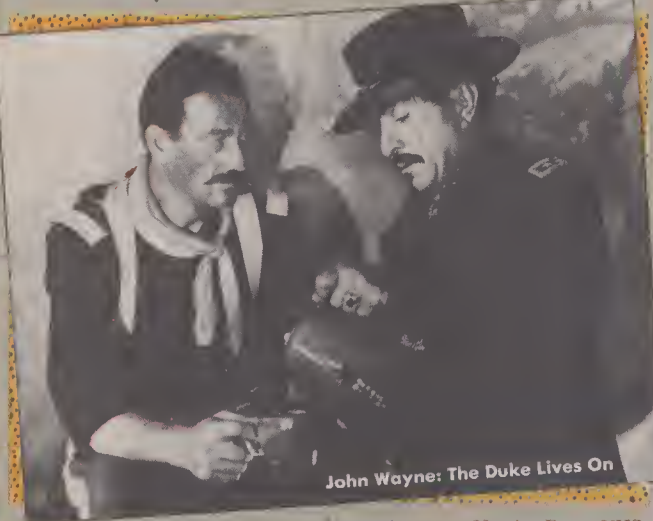
**Visions of Evil.** Color. 1973. Lori Saunders, Dean Jagger. Young woman released from mental institution moves into house where axe murder took place. 85 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

**The Woman Who Came Back.** B&W. 1945. Nancy Kelly, Otto Kruger, John Loder, Ruth Ford, Jeanne Gail, Harry Tyler. Witch's curse. 69 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.95. Sony.

## INFORMATION

**ABC Fun Fit.** Color. 1985. Olympic champ Mary Lou Retton leads fitness exercises for youngsters. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Scholastic.

**The Baby-Safe Home.** Color. 1985. David Horowitz and wife Suzanne McCambridge host program on how to make your home safe from potential hazards to young children. 45 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.



John Wayne: The Duke Lives On

**Broingomes.** Color. 1985. Games designed to teach children about history ("Wrangovia"), animals ("Safari Solitaire"), other topics. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$29.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Broingomes, Cossette #2.** Color. 1985. More learning games enhanced with computer graphics and animation. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Jone Fondo's New Workout.** Color. 1985. Aerobic exercise routines done to music, led by Fonda. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$39.95. Karl.

**John Wayne: The Duke Lives On.** Color/B&W. Tribute/biography featuring personal photos, television footage, interviews, clips from *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, *Fort Apache*, *Sands of Iwo Jima*, *The Quiet Man*, more. 48 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. RKO.

**Kerouac.** Color. Biography of "Beat Generation" writer Jack Kerouac features documentary footage, dramatic recreations. With Allen Ginsberg, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, William Burroughs; music by Charles Mingus, Duke Ellington, Thelonius Monk, Zoot Sims. 74 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Active.

**The Legendary Champions.** B&W. 1968. Documentary on boxing greats, 1882-1929. Footage of John L. Sullivan, James J. Corbett, Bob Fitzsimmons, Jack Dempsey, Gene Tunney, others. 99 min. Beta, VHS. VidAmerica.

**Pumping Iron II: The Women.** Color. 1985. Documentary: female bodybuilders Rachel McLish, Bev Francis, Lori Bowen, Carla Dunlap prepare for 1983 Caesar's Palace World Cup Championship. 107 min. Beta, VHS (closed captioned). \$79.95. Vestron.

**Remembering "Life."** Color/B&W. Walter Cronkite hosts documentary on glory days of *Life* magazine; interviews with photographers, photos of WWII, Korean War, civil-rights movement, Holly-

wood, more. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. Active.

**Romper Room and Friends: Explore Nature.** Color. 1985. Miss Molly, UpUp, Kimble, Granny Cat, and Do Bee lead children in songs and projects concerning trees, animals, and soil. 32 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$19.98. Playhouse.

**Romper Room and Friends: Sizes and Shapes.** Color. 1985. Miss Molly and friends explore the concept of size through demonstrations, at-home projects. 35 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$19.98. Playhouse.

**Romper Room and Friends: Song Book.** Color. 1985. Miss Molly and friends lead children in songs "Start Off Each Day With a Song," "Nonsense," "Circus Surprise," more. 33 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captioned). \$19.98. Playhouse.

**Victory of Sea Volume XIX: The Bottle for Leyte Gulf.** B&W. 1952. Narr. Leonard Graves. One of 26 installments from epic NBC-TV documentary on Allied naval strategy in WWII. Scored Richard Rodgers. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Embassy.

**Victory of Sea Volume XX: Return of the Allies.** B&W. 1952. Narr. Leonard Graves. The liberation of the Philippines. Scored Richard Rodgers. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Embassy.

**Victory of Sea Volume XXI: Full Fathom Five.** B&W. 1952. Narr. Leonard Graves. U.S. submarine activity, 1941-45. Scored Richard Rodgers. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95/90 min. (vols. 19-21). LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**Victory of Sea Volume XXII: The Fate of Europe.** B&W. 1952. Narr. Leonard Graves. Black Sea, South of France. Scored Richard Rodgers. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Embassy.

**Victory of Sea Volume XXIII: Target Suribochi.** B&W. 1952. Narr. Leonard Graves. Battle at Iwo Jima. Scored Richard Rodgers. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Embassy.

**Victory of Sea Volume XXIV: The Road to Mondoloy.** B&W. 1952. Narr. Leonard Graves. Action in China, Burma, India, Indian Ocean. Scored Richard Rodgers. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95/90 min. (vols. 22-24). LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**Victory of Sea Volume XXV: Suicide for Glory.** B&W. 1952. Narr. Leonard Graves. Battle at Okinawa. Scored Richard Rodgers. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Embassy.

**Victory of Sea Volume XXVI: Design for Peace.** B&W. 1952. Narr. Leonard Graves. Surrender of Japan, aftermath of war. Scored Richard Rodgers. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95/90 min. (vols. 25 & 26). LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

**The Way to Cook: First Courses & Desserts.** Color. 1985. Culinary instruction by Julia Child; recipes for mousses and pates, crepes, tarts, genoise, chocolate cake, trifles. Booklet outlines ingredients and cooking instructions. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Knopf.

**The Way to Cook: Fish & Eggs.** Color. 1985. Julia Child demonstrates recipes for sauteed shrimp, lobster, omelettes, timbales, custards, hollandaise sauce, souffles. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Knopf.

**The Way to Cook: Meat.** Color. 1985. Julia Child demonstrates recipes for chops, hamburgers, stews, roasts; plus trimming and carving tips. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Knopf.



**The Way to Cook: Poultry.** Color. 1985. Julia Child demonstrates recipes for chicken saute, coq au vin, holiday turkey, roast duck. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Knopf.

**The Way to Cook: Soups, Salads & Breads.** Color. 1985. Julia Child demonstrates recipes for vichyssoise and French onion soups, chicken salad, potato salad, coleslaw, French bread. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Knopf.

**The Way to Cook: Vegetables.** Color. 1985. Julia Child demonstrates recipes for gratins, tomatoes Provencal, eggplant pizza, scalloped potatoes, plus tips on maximizing tenderness while preserving color. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Knopf.

**Weight Watchers Magazine Guide to Dining and Cooking.** Color. 1985. Lynn Redgrave hosts program on low-calorie meals; includes calorie-guide pamphlet. 56 min. Beta, VHS (closed captioned). \$39.95. Vestron.

**Yesterday's Witness.** B&W. Tribute to American newsreels, featuring recaps of major news stories of the era, commentary by Ed Herlihy, Lowell Thomas, Harry Von Zell. Originally produced for public TV. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. Pacific.

## MISC.

**An Evening With the Royal Ballet.** B&W. 1963. Gala with Britain's Royal Ballet, featuring Rudolph Nureyev, Margot Fonteyn, David Blair and company in "Le Corsaire," "La Valse," "Aurora's Wedding" (act III from *Sleeping Beauty*), "Les Sylphides." 87 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$29.95. MCA.

**Autumn Portrait.** Color. 1985. Footage of nature and seasonal themes set to music recorded for Windham Hill record label. Selections by Will Ackerman, Bill Quist, Alex de Grassi, Daniel Hecht, Shadowfax, Philip Aaberg, Mark Isham, Scott Cossu, Michael O'Donnahill, Bill Oskay. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Paramount./LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**It's Your Birthday Party! With Rainbow Brite and Friends.** Color. 1985. Live action/animated. Rainbow Brite hosts a birthday celebration, leading viewers in songs, games, and parades. Scored by Elizabeth Swados. 48 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Children's.

**The Nutcracker.** Color. Music performed by the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, conducted by Gennady Rozhdestvensky; with Lesley Collier and Anthony Dowell as the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Prince. 120

min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Swan Lake.** Color. 1980. The Royal Ballet's production, performed to Tchaikovsky's music. Choreographed by Frederick Ashton and Rudolph Nureyev; leads danced by Natalia Makarova, Anthony Dowell. Dir. John Michael Phillips. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Water's Path.** Color. 1985. Footage of rivers and streams in the Sierra Mountains, Carmel coastline, with music recorded for Windham Hill record label. Selections by Will Ackerman, Scott Cossu.



Daniel Hecht, Michael Hedges, Bill Quist, Shadowfax, Ira Stein, Russel Walder, George Winston. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Paramount./LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**Western Light.** Color. 1985. Footage of Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, Canyon de Chelly, other natural wonders, set to music recorded for Windham Hill record label. Selections by Will Ackerman, Alex de Grassi, Mark Isham, Shadowfax, Liz Story. 55 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Paramount./LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**Winter.** Color. 1985. Footage of winter months in Colorado, Utah, Nevada, California set to music recorded for Windham Hill record label. Selections by Mark Isham, Will Ackerman, Darol Anger, Alex de Grassi, Paul Dondero, Barbara

Higbie, Michael Manning, Michael O'Donnahill, Bill Oskay, Shadowfax, Liz Story, Cyrille Verdeaux. 53 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Paramount./LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

## MUSIC

**Adriano Lecouvreur.** Color. 1985. Opera by Francesco Cilea, performed by the Elizabethan Sydney Opera. Joan Sutherland stars as Adriana, Richard Bonyngue con-

ducts. Includes libretto and playbill. 138 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, subtitles). \$79.95. Sony.

**Al Jarreau in London.** Color. Concert at Wembley Arena featuring performances of "Raging Waters," "We're in This Love Together," "Roof Garden," more. LV (CX digital stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**The Best of Judy Garland.** B&W. Highlights from Judy's 1960s CBS series. Songs include "Swanee," "The Man That Got Away," "Stormy Weather," "San Francisco," "Chicago," "Over the Rainbow," 17 more. 85 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. MusicVision.

**British Rock—The First Wave.** Color. Michael York narrates documentary on genesis of 1960s British rock music. Includes footage of Beatles, Rolling Stones, Herman's Hermits, Animals, Gerry and the Pacemakers, Freddy and the Dreamers, more. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. MusicVision.

**Buddy Rich and His Bond Live on King Street: The "Chunnel One" Set.** Color. 1985. Jazz drummer Buddy Rich and ensemble in studio performances of "Sophisticated Lady," "Norwegian Wood," "Love for Sale," "One O'Clock Jump," more. 55 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo surround). \$29.95. Sony./LV (CX stereo

surround). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**Cabin in the Sky.** B&W. 1943. Eddie Anderson, Lena Horne, Ethel Waters, Louis Armstrong, Rex Ingram, Duke Ellington, dir. Vincente Minnelli. Devout woman fights to keep the Devil from claiming her husband's soul; includes Waters singing "Happiness Is Just a Thing Called Joe." 99 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Corols for Christmos.** Color. Traditional carols sung by the Royal College of Music Chamber Choir in St. Edmundsbury Cathedral, set to images of religious and seasonal paintings from the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Chaka Khan—This Is My Night.** Color. Recorded live at the Hammersmith Odeon in London; features "I Feel for You," "This Is My Night," "Ain't Nobody," more. LV (CX digital stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**Dialogues of the Carmelites.** Color. 1985. Opera by Francis Poulenc, performed by the Elizabethan Sydney Opera. Starring Dame Joan Sutherland as Sister Blanche; conducted by Richard Bonyngue. Includes libretto and playbill. 155 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, subtitles). \$79.95. Sony.

**Die Fledermaus.** Color. 1985. Johann Strauss' opera as performed by the Elizabethan Sydney Opera. Dame Joan Sutherland stars as Rosalinde; Richard Bonyngue conducts. Includes libretto and playbill. 142 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, subtitles). \$79.95. Sony.

**The Firesign Theatre: Hot Shorts.** Color. Improvisational comedy group spoofs Saturday-matinee cliffhanger serials. LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**Frankie Goes to Hollywood: From a Wasteland to an Artificial Paradise.** Color. Four videos: "Relax" (edited broadcast version plus complete version banned in England), "Two Tribes," "Welcome to the Pleasure Dome." 28 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95. MusicVision.

**The Guess Who—Together Again.** Color. Toronto reunion performance featuring "American Woman," "These Eyes," "No Sugar Tonight," "Laughing," "Takin' Care of Business," "No Time," more. LV (CX stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**Holiday Sing Along with Mitch.** Color. Yuletide episode from NBC series *Sing Along with Mitch*, featuring Mitch Miller and his Sing Along Gang. Leslie Uggams, Diana Trask. Songs (complete with subtitles) include "Joy To the World," "O Come All Ye Faithful," "God Rest Ye Merry



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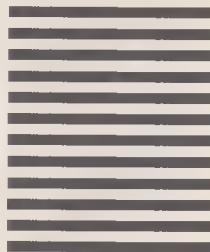
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Gentlemen," "Deck the Halls," more. 57 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MGM/UA.

**Idomeneo.** Color. Mozart's opera as performed by the Metropolitan Opera Company, featuring Luciano Pavarotti, Heana Cortubas. Conducted by James Levine; recorded 11/6/1982 at the Met. LV (CX digital stereo, subtitles). \$49.95. Pioneer.

**Il Trovatore.** Color. 1985. Opera by Giuseppe Verdi, performed by the Elizabethan Sydney Opera. Dame Joan Sutherland as Leonora; cond. Richard Bonynge. Libretto and playbill. 138 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, subtitles). \$79.95. Sony.

**Island Reggae Greats.** Color. Compilation of Jamaican music featuring concert and studio performances intercut with views of native life. Includes songs by Bob Marley ("War/No More Trouble"), Third World ("Now That We've Found Love"), Linton Kwesi Johnson ("The Great Resurrection"), Toots and the Maytals, Black Uhuru, Aswad, others. 28 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95. MusicVision.

**Jermaine Jackson Dynamite Videos.** Color. "Dynamite," "Sweetest Sweetest," "When the Rain Begins to Fall" (with Pia Zadora), "Do What You Do," plus look at the filming of "Do What You Do." 29 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95. MusicVision.

**John Cougar Mellencamp.** Color. 1984. Video compilation including "Jack and Diane," "Hurts So Good," "I Need a Lover," "The Authority Song," "Pink Houses," more. LV (CX digital stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**Jose Jose en Acapulco.** Color. 1985. Concert featuring Spanish pop star; songs include "De Hombre a Hombre," "Almohada," "Me Basta," "El Amor Acaba," others. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. MCA.

**Katrina and the Waves.** Color. 1985. Music-video collection: "Walking on Sunshine," "Que Te Quiero," "Do You Want Crying,"

"Red Wine & Whisky." 30 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95. Sony.

**Kenny and Dolly: Real Love.** Color. Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton in concert. Parton sings "Baby I'm Burning," "9 to 5," Rogers sings "Crazy," "We Are the World;" both perform "Lady," "Jolene," "Reuben," "Here You Come Again," more. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. MusicVision.

**Lo Boheme.** Color. Franco Zeffirelli's production of Puccini's opera, taped at the Metropolitan on 1/16/1982. Features Teresa Stratas as Mimi, tenor Jose Carreras as Rodolfo. LV (CX digital stereo, subtitles). \$49.95. Pioneer.

**Liberace Live!** Color. 1985. The flamboyant pianist in concert with the London Philharmonic Orchestra at London's Wembley Center. Selections include waltzes of Johann Strauss, "The Mexican Hat Dance," "Chopsticks," show-tune medley featuring "New York, New York," "Memories," "Send in the Clowns," more. 56 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. MusicVideo.

**Martin Briley: Dangerous Moments.** Color. Video compilation featuring "Dangerous Moments," "Salt in My Tears," "Put Your Hands on the Screen," more. LV (8 inch, CX stereo). \$10.99. Pioneer.

**Maytime.** B&W. 1937. Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy, John Barrymore, Herman Bing, Rafaela Ottiano, Paul Porcasi, Sig Ruman. Woman opera star and poor singer fall in love in Paris. Songs include "Will You Remember," "Sweetheart." 132 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever.** Color. 1983. 25th Anniversary salute to Motown Records featuring live performances by Michael Jackson ("Billie Jean"), Jackson Five ("I Want You Back," "The Love You Save"), Smokey Robinson and Linda Ronstadt ("Tracks of My Tears"), Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, Four Tops, Temptations, Diana Ross and the Supremes, Lionel

Richie, others. Includes footage cut for original NBC broadcast. 130 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi). \$29.95. MGM/UA.

**Neil Young: Solo Trons.** Color. 1984. "Heart of Gold," "Old Man," "Helpless," "Ohio," 7 others. LV (CX digital stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**One Night with Blue Note Volume 1.** Color. 1985. Jazz concert celebrating rebirth of Blue Note record label. Herbie Hancock emcees and performs with Bobby Hutcherson (vibes), Art Blakey (drums), Bennie Wallace (tenor sax), Stanley Jordan (guitar). Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi digital stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**One Night with Blue Note Volume 2.** Color. 1985. Performances by McCoy Tyner, Grover Washington Jr., Kenny Burrell, Charles Lloyd, Cecil Taylor, Lou Donaldson. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi digital stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Pot Benator: Hit Videos.** Color. "Anxiety (Get Nervous)," "Lipstick Lies," "Shadows of the Night," "Love is a Battlefield," more, plus a look at the making of "Battlefield." LV (2 sides, 8" CX stereo). \$14.95. Pioneer.

**Pot Trovers: Just Another Killer Day.** Color. Mini movie integrating plot with videos "Killer," "Women on the Edge," "Hot Shot." LV (CX stereo). \$16.95. Pioneer.

**The Patti Page Video Songbook.** Color. 1985. 18 songs including "The Tennessee Waltz," "You Call Everybody Darling." Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes.

**Queen: Live in Rio.** Color. 1985. Filmed at the Rock in Rio Festival; includes "Tie Your Mother Down," "Bohemian Rhapsody," "Radio Gaga," "We Are the Champions," "We Will Rock You," more. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Queensryche: Live in Tokyo.** Color. 1985. American heavy-metal band performs "Nightrider," "Prophecy," more. 50 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Reedy Steady Go: The Sounds of Motown.** B&W. 1985. Episode of British TV music series featuring live performances by Supremes, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, Temptations, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, Dusty Springfield. 50 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Sony.

**Reedy Steady Go: The Beatles Live.** B&W. Episode of British TV music series features John, Paul, George, and Ringo performing "Twist and Shout," "Roll Over Beethoven," "I Wanna Be Your Man," "She Loves You," 7 more. 20 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$16.95. Sony.

**Reedy Steady Go: Otis Red-**

**ding.** B&W. 1966. Episode of British TV music series featuring Otis Redding and guests Eric Burdon, Chris Farlow. Songs include "Satisfaction," "My Girl," "Respect," "Shake," more. 25 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95. Sony.



**Reedy Steady Go, Volume 3.** B&W. Compilation of performances from '60s TV show. Features Marvin Gaye ("How Sweet It Is"), Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, others. 57 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$29.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Rick Springfield: Platinum Videos.** Color. "Jessie's Girl," "Don't Talk to Strangers," "What Kind of Fool Am I," "Affair of the Heart," more. LV (CX stereo). \$16.95. Pioneer.

**Ronnie Milsop: Golden Video Hits.** Color. Country rock-video collection includes "She Loves My Car," "I Wouldn't Have Missed It for the World," "There's No Gettin' Over Me," "Any Day Now," "Stranger in My House," "Lost in the Fifties Tonight." 30 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95. MusicVision.

**Rose Marie.** B&W. 1936. Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy, Reginald Owen, Allan Jones, James Stewart, Alan Mowbray, Gilda Gray, David Niven. Mountie falls in love with woman while pursuing her fugitive brother. Songs include "The Mounties," "Rose Marie," "Indian Love Call" (aka "When I'm Calling You"). 112 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**Somson et Dolila.** Color. 1981. Royal Opera House production featuring Shirley Verrett as Dalila, Jon Vickers as Samson; cond. Colin Davis. 135 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

**Serebrier Conducts.** Color.





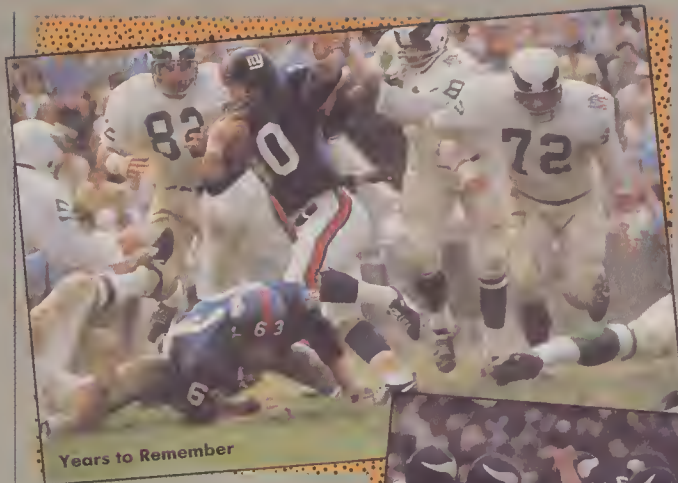
1985. Jose Serebrier cond. Sydney Symphony Orchestra, rec. live at Sydney Opera House. Selections by Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky, Beethoven. 134 min. Beta, VHS (stereo). \$59.95. Kultur.

**Smilin' Through.** Color. 1941. Jeanette MacDonald, Brian Aherne, Gene Raymond, Ian Hunter, Frances Robinson, Patrick O'Moore. Musical romance set in English countryside during WWI. Songs include title piece, "Land of Hope and Glory," "A Little Love, A Little Kiss." 101 min. Beta, VHS. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

**The Thompson Twins: Into the Gap Live.** Color. Concert performance by Thompson Twins (Tom Bailey, Alannah Currie, Joe Leeway). Songs include "In the Name of Love," "Lies," "Hold Me Now," "Into the Gap," 9 more. 80 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby B, Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. MusicVision.

**Tina Live: Private Dancer Tour.** Color. Tina Turner in concert versions of "What's Love Got to Do With It," "Better Be Good to Me," "Private Dancer," "Let's Stay Together," more. Appearances by David Bowie, Bryan Adams. LV (CX digital stereo). \$24.95. Pioneer.

**White City.** Color. 1985. Extended music video starring Pete Townshend, with score taken from his *White City* LP; story concerns

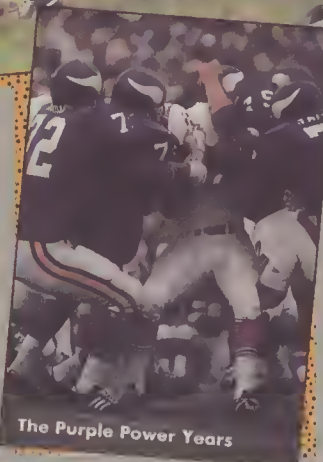


musician who helps friend patch up broken marriage. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. MusicVideo.

## SPORTS

**Glory Days of Yesteryear: The Baltimore Colts 1964, 1965, 1968, 1970.** Football highlights from years the Colts won two NFL Championships. 140 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NFL.

**The Legacy Begins: Miami Dolphins 1970-74.** Color. Football highlights: 1971 OT Playoff



game against the Chiefs, perfect 1972 season, two Super Bowl victories, last-second loss to the Raiders in 1974 Playoffs. Footage of players Larry Csonka, Bob

Griese, Paul Warfield, Jake Scott, others. 124 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NFL.

**The Purple Power Years: The Minnesota Vikings 1969, 1973, 1974, 1976.** Color. Football highlights from years the Vikings went to the Super Bowl. Footage of players Fran Tarkenton, Chuck Foreman, others. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NFL.

**A Winning Tradition: The Cleveland Browns 1964, 1965, 1967, 1968, 1969.** Football highlights from years the Browns won division titles, NFL Championship. Explores rivalries with the Giants, Cowboys, Packers, Colts; footage of players Jim Brown, Leroy Kelly, others. 137 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NFL.

**Years of Glory, Years of Pain: The 25-Year History of the Buffalo Bills.** Compilation of football highlights: the AFL championship season, Playoff teams of early 1980s. Footage of team stars O.J. Simpson, Jack Kemp, Frank Lewis, Elbert Dubenion, others. 28 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. NFL.

**Years to Remember: The New York Giants 1958, 1959, 1961, 1962, 1963.** Color. Football highlights from years the Giants won NFL Eastern conference title; featuring players Sam Huff, Jim Katcavage, Frank Gifford, Alex Webster, others. 140 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NFL.

## SOURCES

**Active Home Video**, 211 S. Beverly Dr. 100, Beverly Hills, Calif. 90912 (213-274-8233).

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**Karl/Lorimar Home Video**, 17942 Cowan Ave., Irvine, Calif. 92714 (714-474-0355).

**Kartes Video Communication—VC 2000**, 10 E. 106th St., Indianapolis, Ind. 46280 (800-331-1387).

**Key Video**, 1298 Prospect Ave., La Jolla, Calif. 92037 (619-459-0500).

**Knopf Video Books**, Random House, 400 Hahn Road, Westminster, Md. 21157 (800-638-6460).

**Kultur**, c/o Coastal Video Services, 1340 Ocean Ave. 12B, Sea Bright, N.J. 07760 (201-842-6693).

**Lightning Video**, Box 4384, Stamford, Conn. 06907 (203-329-1463).

**Magic Window Video**, 2901 W. Alameda Avenue, Burbank, Calif. 91505 (818-954-4950).

**MCA Home Video**, 70 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, Calif. 91608 (818-508-4315).

**MGM/UA Home Video**, 1350 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-408-0600).

**Monterey Home Video**, 7920 Alabama Ave., Canoga Park, Calif. 91304 (800-423-7444).

**MPI Home Video**, Maljack Productions, 15825 Rob Roy Dr., Oak Forest, Ill. 60452 (312-687-7881).

**Vestron MusicVideo**, Box 4000, Stamford, Conn. 06907 (203-968-0000).

**MusicVision**, 2901 W. Alameda Ave., Burbank, Calif. 91505 (213-

954-4950).

**NFL Films Video**, 330 Fellowship Rd., Mt. Laurel, N.J. 08054 (800-NFL-TAPE).

**Nostalgia Merchant**, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, Calif. 90230 (213-216-7900, 800-421-4509).

**Pacific Arts Video Records**, Box 22770, Carmel, Calif. 93922 (408-624-4704).

**Paramount Home Video**, 5451 Marathon St., Hollywood, Calif. 90038 (213-468-5000).

**Pioneer Artists**, c/o Pioneer Video, 200 W. Grand Ave., Montvale, N.J. 07645 (201-573-1122).

**Playhouse Video**, 1211 Sixth Ave., 2nd floor, New York, N.Y. 10036 (212-819-3228).

**Prism Entertainment**, 1875 Century Park E. 1010, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067 (213-277-3270).

**RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video**, 2901 W. Alameda Ave., Burbank, Calif. 91505 (818-954-4950).

**Republic Pictures Home Video**, 12636 Beatrice St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90066-0930 (213-4040).

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# Why our competitors hate our guts.

The "guts" of every Goldstar color TV are built to the same high standards as our competitors' expensive models. With the same state-of-the-art components. And our picture quality is a match for theirs in every way.

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When you spend less for a Goldstar, you won't be getting less of a TV.

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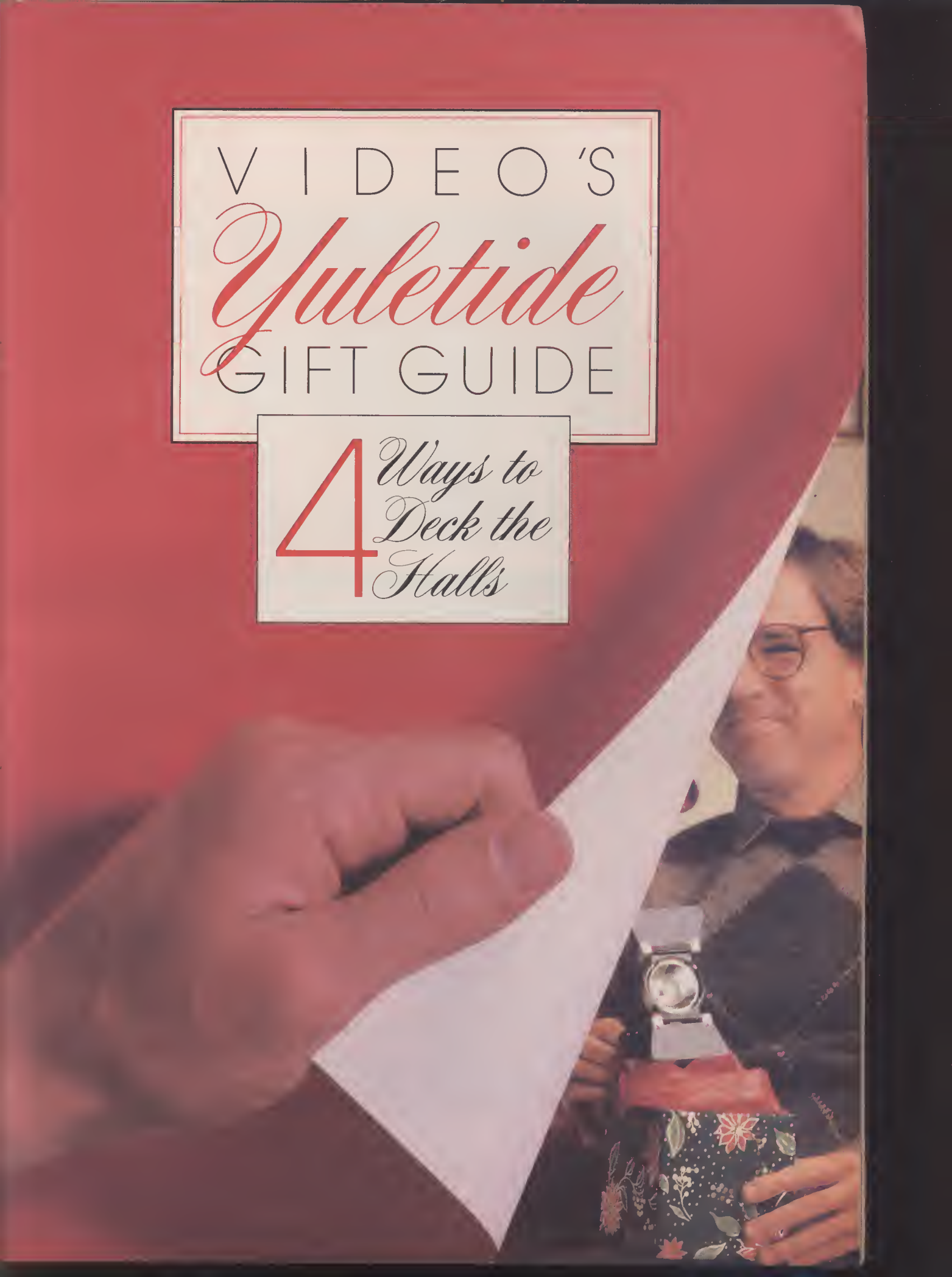
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V I D E O ' S  
*Yuletide*  
GIFT GUIDE

*4 Ways to  
Deck the  
Halls*



# STARTING OUT

*Beginning  
with the basics –  
a neophyte's  
first step*

BY MARTIN PORTER



*In the beginning, simplicity counts. Video novices may wish to start with a basic two-head VCR like Goldstar's GHV55FM (bottom) for \$469, or a triple-header like Minolta's MV-30S (top) for \$6.15. Discwasher's Starter kit, \$29.95, will improve your new connections.*



You can spot a video virgin a mile away. They're as shy as schoolgirls when talking to salesmen and easily swept off their feet by a discount price. They can also be fooled into spending more than they want by a sales pitch full of mumbo jumbo.

If this holiday season marks your first time, here are two pieces of shopping advice: take it easy and keep it simple.

True, with VCR options such as Hi-Fi audio, noise free special effects, and built-in stereo TV decoders, it can be easy to go overboard your first time out. So why not blow the wad now—get every feature you'll ever need and start hobnobbing with the top-of-the-line set from the start? Here's why not.

At a recent dinner party I met someone who had recently acquired his first VCR. He was amazed at what it could do, puzzled by how he had ever lived without one, and eager to pick my brain. After a few minutes of picking he realized that he had bought a high-end VCR and still had no idea of what the machine could offer in terms of special effects and enhanced audio. In other words, he easily could have purchased a machine for one-third the price and still have been blown away by the technology.

It hasn't always been so easy to gain such satisfaction, but VCRs are getting cheaper—under \$200 in some areas. Fortunately for the video novice, these models are stripped down and easily understood by anyone who knows his Beta from his VHS.

But that's too big an assumption. So, with some concessions to simplicity, here's all you have to know about the difference between Beta and VHS:

Beta was the first successful home-video format around. It records at a higher speed and



Finally, a TV set as flashy as a TV star. Quasar's colorful Fashion Accent 13-inch portable comes with a clone-like remote control. The price for Model TP2156YR is \$359.95.

loops the tape around the tape heads in a format that insures a higher quality picture than the VHS alternative. However, most virgin eyes can't distinguish between a VHS and Beta picture. VHS allows longer taping times and has emerged as the more popular of the two home video formats.

You don't care about popularity, you say? You might if, for example, your local tape store rents only VHS tapes, or if your friends are VHS owners who frequently exchange videocassettes. Then again, you'll often find Beta decks, including a few Hi-Fi ones, at hard-to-beat prices.

So, ultimately, the decision is up to you.

Before you hit the demo rooms, let's look at how a few VHS and Beta VCRs stack up on paper. Remember, the price tags are manufacturer's suggested list and are often discounted.

#### Beta

Sanyo makes one of the most inexpensive VCRs around, the VCR4400 (about \$320). It

comes with a built-in timer that lets you record one program over a three-day period. Its tuner lets you watch a range of 82 UHF and VHF channels and even allows 12 station presets. You can search through the tape in either forward or reverse and the cassette automatically rewinds when it is through. It also comes with a wired remote control. Though the model is mono, Sanyo also offers a low-budget Hi-Fi model, VCR 7150, an excellent value at \$349.95.

Sony—the real home video trail blazer—now offers a budget model of its own, the SL-10 (\$400). Though mono, it lets you record six different programs at any time over a single week and has an 82-channel tuner with 14 presets. It also lets you freeze a frame and visually search in either direction (both features in the Beta III mode only). The deck automatically powers-on once the tape is inserted and rewinds at tape's end. You can also record a program with the touch of a single button. The unit comes with a wired remote control.

#### VHS

The VHS camp has done a fine job of playing technical catch-up with the Beta side since the late-'70s when home video first hit home. On price alone Beta still has the upper hand—but then it *has* to sell its machines cheaper. How else can it attract consumers to its technically superior though less popular format?

Still, these days even the big VHS names are exploring ways to stimulate sales at “the bottom of the line.” Mitsubishi, for example, offers the HS-318UR (about \$400), a streamlined unit that lets you record and play back in three different speeds. In two of those speeds (SP and EP) you can scan the picture in forward or reverse to find the right place or even freeze frame (in EP only). The 318's tuner lets you shop for broadcast or cable stations on a 105-channel bandwidth with 16 presets along the way. Four different programs can be recorded automatically over a two-week time span. And, as an added plus, it comes with a wireless remote control.

You'll have to shell out a few more dollars to locate a VHS machine with the features of Sony's Beta budget model. For about \$550, JVC—the company that invented VHS—now offers the HR-D140U. The unit automatically selects a tape's playback mode (in three different speeds), records in two speeds, and offers a still-frame special effect. You can search the picture in either direction, though its timer only lets you record one program over a two-week timespan. Otherwise, it has an 82-channel tuner and will automatically power-on (with tape insertion) and record with a touch of one button. It also comes with a wireless remote control.

Again, both models offer monophonic sound only.

However, the Model FVH-820 from Fisher comes with a slightly higher \$599 price tag

and has enhanced stereo audio capabilities. It won't sound as good as a full-fledged Hi-Fi VHS machine but there will be some audio imaging, silenced by Dolby noise reduction. More important, the budget unit also comes with a decoder that will let your TV accept stereo broadcast TV signals.

On the video end, the unit has a timer that lets you record five events over a two-week period, three speed record and playback, and still frame and forward/reverse picture search special effects. It also comes with a wireless remote control.

### VCP

The aforementioned units are as standard and streamlined as VCRs get these days. However, in this world of high-tech sophistication yet another video trend is simplifying an otherwise confusing mess: VCRs that don't record, otherwise known as VCPs (short for videocassette players).

With VCRs so cheap these days, who needs a deck that only plays back? Try someone who wants a second machine for dubbing purposes only, or someone who wants a lightweight deck to travel with. Or perhaps someone who just wants the simplest device possible (but without the convenience of off-the-air taping).

How simple can VCPs be? Portavideo offers its VCP2100 at a list of only \$230. The unit allows three-speed play back, forward/reverse scan, and freeze frame in all modes. Supra, meanwhile, has the SV70 for \$280. It's a top-loading model with auto rewind, auto play and one-speed (SP) play back only.

Even VCPs can come full of features, though. General Electric's 1VCP6020 (\$330) is a top-loading model with three-speed play back, forward/reverse picture scan, and pause/still frame modes. Meanwhile, Magnavox's VR8500SL (\$399)

## YOU MAY AS WELL KNOW THERE'S AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE VCP —THE VIDEO DISC PLAYER

has similar features with the addition of back panel add-on jacks. The 12-pound unit also works as a portable via a 12V DC power input.

### Videodiscs

You may as well know at the start that there's another alternative to both the VCR and the VCP—the videodisc player. Once there were different formats to choose from even in this video category, but no more. For now, at least in the U.S., your disc player will have to spin a shiny platter (either 8 or 12 inches in diameter) called an optical disc.

The video information is read off the surface by a laser which ensures that the disc never wears out and that you can skip instantly anywhere you want throughout the program. Videodisc players offer superior picture and sound quality. There's one big drawback, though. You can't record.

If this doesn't scare you away, a good entry level videodisc machine is available from Pioneer Video—the PR8210. For \$299 it provides stereo playback with noise reduction and comes with its own wireless remote control. The remote is especially important for a disc player since it allows you to search throughout the disc from anywhere in the room in slow motion or fast scan, while each frame is labeled by frame number, chapter and elapsed time.

### Television

The VCR may be the best way to 'break into' video, but even the most sophisticated VCR won't do its trick without

a TV by its side. The venerable boob tube hasn't been immune to the increased sophistication of the video medium. In fact, these days you can find sets full of input holes and microprocessor scanning features—and big enough to fill a wall of your apartment. But remember: keep it simple the first time out. Fortunately, there are plenty of TVs that will let you experience the virtues of video for less than \$500—without driving you to buy a Cuisinart instead.

For instance, Sylvania's CBE152SL is a 15-inch color portable for just over \$300. It can handle up to 82 channels and let you scan the dial selection in either direction. The unit comes with both automatic fine tuning and automatic gain control.

That's as simple as TVs get these days—although you can still find black and white sets without cable tuning features and with manual (as in twist-of-the-wrist dial) controls and adjustments. For under \$500 you can even step cautiously into the fast lane—into the world of video high tech—with a monitor/receiver.

Don't be confused by the terminology. A monitor/receiver is the same as a regular TV except that, as the name indicates, it is equipped with a variety of holes in the back into which you can plug other components, from one to several VCRs, and even a stereo Hi-Fi system.

Sharp's 14-inch monitor/receiver, the 14KV465 (\$450), for example, accommodates a variety of add-ons. It also offers a 105-channel cable-com-

patible tuner and its own wireless remote control. The set comes with automatic fine tuning and electronic tuning features. There's even a button to instantly recall the last channel you watched.

Expand your picture (diagonally, that is) with Toshiba's CX-2025 20-inch set (\$490). This set features the new FST picture tube, which provides a squared-off corner appearance, and comes with A/V input jacks on the back panel for future system connections. The tuner is electronic and lets you scan a bandwidth as wide as 117 channels.

### Care and Feeding

Your new video possessions won't last very long if you don't take care of them. Happily, there are a variety of video hygiene products that will keep your equipment and picture squeaky clean.

Allsop offers a Pro Video Care Kit (\$40) which includes either a VHS or Beta head cleaning cassette, a VCR dust cover, and two blank videocassettes. After you're done with the dirty work you can exercise with *Jane Fonda's Workout* which is recorded on one of the blanks. Meanwhile, Discwasher sells the Video Starter Kit with its own Beta or VHS video head cleaner as well as some simple accessory hardware including cables, an A/B switch and a signal splitter (\$30).

If you prefer to dip under your VCR's hood to do the cleaning chores, look over the Deluxe Maintenance Kit (VCR-50, \$40) from Nortronics. It includes a cleaning solution, foam cleaning swabs, and a can of compressed air to blast the dirt from your VCR's innards.

Of course all this cleaning action won't do any good unless there's videotape to spin along your VCR's heads. There's a lot to choose from in this category, but VIDEO's technical

*continued on page 182*





## NEC's recording experience here...

The TV studio: where only the very best equipment is good enough. That's why TV stations throughout the world turn to broadcast products from NEC—with technology so advanced it's won two Emmy Awards.

Even if you're not about to broadcast your tapes coast to coast, it's comforting to know that NEC builds much of our pro technology into videocassette recorders for the home.

Consider the new N-961U VHS Hi-Fi VCR, NEC's studio heritage is evident in the glitch-free images during still picture and slow motion. The seamless scene-to-scene transitions of Assembly Editing. The amazing sound of stereo TV reception. And the studio-grade stereo recording of VHS Hi-Fi. The wireless remote control even operates an NEC TV Receiver/Monitor.

You see, building first-rate professional products is not enough for NEC. We feel obligated to take the world's most advanced technology one step further.

Into your home.

# NEC

We bring high technology home.

## brings you a better recording experience here.



# SETTLING IN

*Camcorders,  
power packs  
and other  
near essentials*

BY MURRAY SLOVICK



**V**ideo expansion can take many forms: Toshiba's four-head M-5400 VCR for \$649.95; Sharp's QC-54 'Small Wonder' camera, \$529.95, and five-inch 5H12 TV, \$399; Recoton's V197 Tape rewinder, \$124.99; and Tenba's V-212 equipment bag for \$150.



No video system is complete without a camera or camcorder. So devoted am I to this notion that friends chide me about it. As a camera buff, though, I know that what camera users want most is to be prepared for diverse and unexpected video encounters. What we like least is to be hampered by complex or weighty equipment.

Fortunately, this holiday season video manufacturers are ladling up a full serving of gift possibilities for those whose idea of heaven is time spent behind an electronic viewfinder. None of these products are complicated to operate and most, if not all, can be readily purchased, which is a boon to the busy gift buyer. Almost all will allow users to put a little more pizzazz in their camera or camcorder's performance so that this season will still look bright, shiny, and festive on videotape, bringing the spirit of '85 to Christmases to come.

### The Extra Margin

When using your video camera and portable VCR or camcorder outdoors, it is important to protect the equipment from the harsh elements of nature—rain, dirt, sand and dust—as well as from the bumps and scratches that are part of location shooting. A variety of portable VCR bags, many retailing from about \$30 to \$100, are available for almost every video recorder and can be worn over the shoulder, on the hip or as a back pack. Here are a few we recommend as Christmas gifts for the video camera or camcorder owner.

Tenba's V212 does the work of two video bags. An expandable front pocket holds most Matsushita- or Hitachi-made VHS VCRs and expands to also hold a video camera, lens adapter, tape and battery. When the camera is in use, the

## FOR SMOOTHER, STEADIER IMAGES, A TRIPOD IS AN ESSENTIAL ACCESSORY



The auto-focus Minolta K510S AF, \$750, is a compact, easy to use video camera. It comes with a handy carrying bag to protect the camera against accidents.

bag contracts to a slimmer size. It is padded with a half inch of water-resistant foam. Lowe Video's Action Pack holds a VCR, a camera, an extra battery, and a tripod. It can be used as a carrying case, a back pack or shoulder bag. Ambico's VOY-31 camera and equipment bag (\$64.95) has removeable dividers so that you can custom fit it to your camera and VCR. This is important because the camera and VCR should fit snugly in its case and not bounce around as you walk.

Coast Manufacturing's VC-20 (\$99) is a total video system carryall that holds most video cameras, camcorders or Beta or VHS portable systems. Bib's VE-150 (\$109.95) is another universal video camera bag that measures 14 by 10 by 8 inches and is well-constructed. Also a

good gift for the travelling videographer is a tripod bag, such as Kiwi's inexpensive model TP21 (\$34.95).

### Ready, Steady

Video camera owners who really catch the home taping production bug sooner or later will want to try taping a wedding, graduation or social gathering. Since these can be lengthy, before long you'll tire—even using today's very light camera separates or camcorders. The inevitable result will be jittery home videotape footage. For consistently smoother, steadier images during pan, tilting, zoom and sharp angle shots, a tripod is essential. Things to look for in buying a tripod as a gift include a well balanced "no tip" head, a fluid or—less expensive—fluid effect head to permit smooth

vertical and horizontal camera motion, sturdy legs that can easily hold the camera's weight in all shooting positions and a tripod mount that matches the camera receptacle mount. The Christmas video shopper in search of a tripod would do well to consider these models: RCA's AC011, spring loaded, lightweight with closed channel legs (\$86.95); Comprehensive Video's model 6144, fluid effect head, compact (\$139.00); and Bogen's fluid head models 3124 and 3120.

### Sound and Light

On-camera lamps—usually a quartz lamp sitting atop the camera, will not illuminate a room but can be effective for close shooting. Smith Victor's Q250 (\$59.95) is an effective 250 volt AC unit with a 15-foot cable, a shoe, and adapter mounts. Another effective quartz light source is Coast Manufacturing's VL-100 (\$99.95) which is a 100-watt, 12-volt DC-powered lamp with barn doors, diffusion screen and mounting handle.

Once the subject is illuminated, the videographer will want to make certain that the camera will be able to hear him, too. A good wireless microphone aid is Azden's WMS-10 remote microphone transmitter and receiver (\$150). The transmitter includes a microphone that clips to a belt or elsewhere on your subject and comes with a windscreen to eliminate extraneous noise. The receiver, which picks up the transmitted signal and feeds it to the video camera, fits into the camera's shoe and connects to the microphone jack. An earphone is included for monitoring and two channels are available for audio transmission for the clearest reception.

For remote transmission of both audio and video we recommend the VDP-Pak Hawk-eye cordless video/audio transmitter. It will send video pictures live to a TV set in color or

# Yuletide

## GIFT GUIDE



**S**AFT America's Again & Again NPP-1245C Nickel Cadmium Power Pack, about \$139, weighs three pounds, yields six hours of power, and recharges 1,000 times.

black and white from up to 200 feet away from a VCR. To do this you simply plug into an AC or battery power source, raise the transmitter's antenna, tune the TV to Channel 14 and receive the transmission. You can also transmit recorded videotapes from your VCR or record signals on a VCR by setting the VCR tuner to channel 14. Next, plug in a standard video camera to the Video and Audio input connections of the Hawkeye VTR-80 video transmitter. It will send video and audio to your VCR.

A number of non-professional video cameras are now able to use the lenses and optical equipment originally designed for 35mm SLP cameras. Adapter rings are available, for example, for JVC's GX-N8 to let you use SLP lenses for Canon, Olympus, Minolta, Nikon and Pentax cameras. The rings make lens exchanges a twist-

on/twist-off process. With the small image size of half-inch pickup tubes, the six to one power zoom makes a 50mm SLP lens become a 300mm lens, and a 600mm lens become a super telephoto 3600mm lens. Check if your gift recipient has SLP lens exchange capability. If so, a wide angle or telephoto lens could be the ideal surprise.

On the subject of lenses, only purists will quibble with the range of applications offered by the Ambico add-on lens system, including a Fisheye (V-0310) to widen the angle of view, an ultra wide angle Hemispheric (V-0312), a close up wide view lens (V-0311) and two telephoto lenses: the V-0342 with 1.4 magnification.

### Hours of Power

Editing controllers were not as popular as video camera ac-

cessory manufacturers hoped when they introduced these products, in part because the half inch format has inherent editing limits. The 8mm format, with its flying erase head, has eliminated some of these difficulties. For owners of Sony's CCD-V8K camcorder, that company's RM-E100 edit controller (\$180) makes the perfect accessory gift. It simplifies editing 8mm home movies onto half inch tape and incorporates such valuable features as the storage of up to eight commands in memory to allow automatic assemble editing of eight program segments. A preview mode offers the opportunity to review and edit a section of tape before making the final cuts.

To add professional authenticity to a video tape, RCA's keyboard character generator will handle up to 20 pages of text in four different letter sizes. The model CGA 010 (\$249.95) can scroll and has

special effects such as curtains, windows, and other screen wipes.

Newcomers to video camera work can now afford the convenience of extended power for cameras and VCRs thanks to a number of portable battery packs on the market. Saft America's rechargeable battery belt (\$99.95), for instance, features two pouches for the batteries, a third pouch for the charger and car cord receptacle, and suspenders to make wearing it comfortable. Four hours of continuous power are provided.

Other recommended power packs are the Bescor NC-7 (\$119.95) and Saft's NPP-1245C Nickel Cadmium Power Pack (\$139). Weighing three pounds, the latter is good for six hours of power and 1,000 charges—enough for a holiday's worth of home taping, and then some.





## If you can read this, you need a videotape as sensitive to color as you are. Panasonic Sensicolor.™

Of course, this isn't an official color blindness test. But you already know how sensitive you are to color. And if you really care about accurate color. Rich color. Color the way TV networks want you to see it. You'll want Panasonic Sensicolor Videotape.

Panasonic Sensicolor faithfully reproduces color. From the subtlest tones to the boldest hues. And every color remains true, replay after replay. Because the same technology and attention to detail that makes Panasonic a leader in VCRs is behind our VHS™

videotapes, too. Panasonic videotape is available in three grades. Premium Standard, Super High-Grade and Hi-Fi. All with Sensicolor quality.

Take one home and give it the most difficult test of all. See it with your own eyes.



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# GETTING OBSESSED

*When too much  
is never enough,  
a guide to  
grandiose gear*

BY MURRAY SLOVICK



**R**eady for top gear? How about Harmon Kardon's VHS VCR, the VCD-1000, \$850; Canon's Canonvision 8, \$1000; RCA's AV005 power pack, \$149.95; Pioneer's TVM 251 monitor, \$999; Nikki's 8mm camera bag, \$68; and Discwasher Gold-End, \$9.95 to \$23.95.





**T**he Recoton V-622, \$149, is the most ingenious MTS adapter available. It works with all TVs and can extract stereo signals even from the mono tuners in older sets.

**T**housands of shoppers are once again facing the annual question of what to buy their video-enthusiast friends and relatives this holiday season. By enthusiast I mean the person who has a higher-than-average interest, prior knowledge of video, and a sophistication that may exceed your own.

The first step in the perfect gift is to decide what type of enthusiast will receive it. Some video aficionados lean toward accumulating an arsenal of additional video products and will appreciate nearly every video-related gift you may choose. Others, after purchasing a VCR and/or camera and a few basic accessories, suffer from a kind of paralysis brought on by having so many options to choose. Shopping for this person is more difficult. Still others—no less interested in the craft of video—believe they already have all the equipment they need. In this case you may actually do better by buying them scarves.

Because of these different video personalities, my choices are conservative. After all, the real meaning of your gift is not the hardware itself, but the appreciation of the recipient.

### Signal Processors

Video signal processors, at first mention, sound like another offering from the black-box school of design that provides high performance but few visible benefits. Rest assured, they are not. Properly designed, this "black box" lets you make multiple copies without picture or sound degradation, adjust jittery pictures, and enhance washed-out colors.

Showtime Video Ventures' SM-1RF system processor (\$280) allows the user to dub from one VCR to another, or between a VCR and a TV. A video-enhancer circuit ensures a high-quality video image by minimizing distortion and noise during copying. The unit enhances image sharpness and detail of all video source input—VCR, projection TV, disc player—along with color saturation/intensity and color hue/balance adjustment.

A variable split-screen delay control lets users decide how much adjustment they need since it is possible to view both the unenhanced and the enhanced picture simultaneously. A built-in video stabilizer circuit reduces signal loss and assures cleaner edit points. Inputs and outputs include stereo audio in, video in, and video out.

Home video is no longer just time-shift viewing or playing back pre-recorded tapes. A rapidly expanding circle of enthusiasts want to create professional-looking productions using advanced production techniques. JVC's JX-C7 (\$350) video corrector permits your recipient to edit or dub among a wide range of video and audio sources. Among the product's highlights are its color-correction circuit, an image enhancer, and separate audio and video fade-in/out.

Its color-balance facility has independent red, green, and blue color circuits to correct misadjusted white balance or improper filter settings during camera recording. Adjustment is by a joystick controller. Image enhancement is provided to touch up fuzzy pictures, and color-density correction deepens or lightens color intensity. The JX-C7 has two pair of audio and video input/output terminals, separate external audio input terminals, and a mic jack.

Akai's PS-V20U audio/video processor has a joystick to control color correction and a sliding control for variable mixing between mic and line. Both audio and video fading are possible. Full luminance (brightness) and color level and hue controls are provided. A dynamic

noise-reduction circuit cuts high-frequency noise.

If you'd really like to splurge on audio/video components this year, we highly recommend the Kenwood KVR-A90R. With a single wireless remote control unit, it gives you control of a 70-watt per channel audio receiver, along with a high fidelity turntable, tape deck and CD player.

It also permits switching and dubbing between two VCRs, a video disc player, a cable TV source and two monitors. The 10-key remote control pad accesses 20 presets as well as a graphic equalizer. Synthetic stereo enhancement for mono sources rounds out the lengthy list of features for this \$540 unit.

### Stereo Explosion

Until recently TV was a restricted medium with few viewing choices and low-fidelity sound. Now high-fidelity videotapes offer the spaciousness and stereo separation of a theater, and TV broadcasting in stereo has begun and is expanding rapidly. To take advantage of today's stereo TV broadcasts you need an MTS circuit built into your set or an accessory box that includes decoder circuitry attached to the



**A**udio receivers are more versatile now. Kenwood's KVR-A90R, \$490, includes not only a video-audio input but seven-band EQ and synthetic-stereo circuits.



**S**tudio-bound videophiles will appreciate Zenith's compact SB2071P, for \$770, a component in its "Cube" series.

**FOR  
CONSUMERS  
WHO HAVE  
STEREO-  
READY TVs  
A LOGICAL  
GIFT IS A  
MULTI-  
CHANNEL  
TELEVISION  
SOUND  
(MTS)  
ADAPTER.**

equipped are often called "stereo ready".

For consumers who have purchased stereo-ready sets within the last two years, the logical gift answer to the local arrival of stereo TV broadcasting is an MTS adapter. But you must be careful because not all decoders work with stereo (read television) receivers. Decoders that will work with most brands' MPX jacks include the Jensen AVS250, (\$129.95), Quasar's DC4300KA (\$129.95), Recoton's V622 (\$129.95), and Viditek's SRF220 (\$129.95).

Among decoder boxes dedicated to a given brand, Sanyo's model MSA100 (\$99.95) works in conjunction with adapter jacks found on the rear of three of the company's 19-inch sets (91C601, 91C621, and 91C625), and its AVR58 monitor/receiver. It also has circuitry enabling users to select from two different audio

sources—a valuable benefit to people interested in receiving SAP bilingual broadcasts.

Pioneer's VZ-100 has been designed specifically to receive MTS stereo TV broadcasts with Pioneer's SD-25 expandable TV system or VC-T700 video control tuner. The VZ-100 permits reception of stereo and SAP programs. It has an auto function mode in which the circuit automatically switches back to Main Sound, in stereo or mono, when an SAP broadcast ends.

We mentioned these decoders not only to give you examples of the features they offer, but to demonstrate how dedicated to a specific brand or even a specific model within the brand line a decoder can be. We cannot overemphasize the importance of determining what "stereo ready" set your recipient has before shopping for a decoder so as not to disappoint your recipient.

This year, an entire spectrum of video gifts can be summed up by the words "surround sound." Denon's AVC-500 audio/video control center (\$375), for example, incorporates a circuit to help restore the feel of original theatrical productions. Called the Denon Ambiance Recovery System, the circuitry processes sound for reproduction by a second pair of rear channel speakers. For this purpose the AVC-500 has a 20-watt-per-channel amplifier which can also amplify the audio portion of video programs when the video system is not hooked up to high-fidelity audio components.

The Denon AVC-500's complement of audio signal-processing functions includes a five-band graphic equalizer for the audio portion of video signals (equalization difficulties in video can include poor bass and unintelligible voice tracks). The equalizer operates only in the

presence of an audio signal so as not to accent background noise during quiet passages. The control center includes three sets of video and four sets of audio input and output terminals. An automatic copying circuit activates the input selectors for video copying among three decks.

Canon's S1-10 video sound processor creates "surround sound" audio by extracting what the company says is reverberent sound information—subaural sound produced by the environment during recording—and reproducing it through front and rear speakers. The result is the feel of a room in which you are surrounded by sound, as you would be in a movie theater or concert hall.

Theater-like sound reproduction also comes with Sansui's AV-C10 selector dubbing control center (\$250). This

*continued on page 182*



# EYE-FI



You're looking at what's ahead for the television. At Proton, we call it "eye-fi".

The Proton 625, above, is a video monitor/receiver. It's the evolution of American TV. Enjoy absolutely superior performance just as it is. Enhance its great sound by making it a component part of your present audio system.

A demonstration will convince you of the stark difference between Proton and what you're used to. You'll see deep, rich black, not washed-out gray. You'll see vibrant color and true perspective. You'll see images from all angles and distorted angles. You'll see all your TV shows in full broadcast color. You'll see the difference between a good TV and a great TV. You'll see how better Proton is than any other TV on the market.

While Proton has features of other sets like infrared remote control, 139 channel tuning range, and a built-in stereo tuner, our monitor/receiver goes beyond any other brand's "state-of-the-art" technology. Even beyond, in resolution capability, the signal quality TV stations presently broadcast.

In short, Proton is what TV should be. But something this superior isn't inexpensive. Just remember what your dad always said... "You get what you pay for." He didn't know that with Proton you get a whole lot more.

See for yourself. Call us for the nearest Proton dealer. Because if we're this careful about the quality of our TV, we're also careful about the quality of our Proton warranty. It's the best.

P R O T O N

# CARRIED AWAY

*Caution:  
shopping here  
may be dangerous  
to your health*

BY MARC WIELAGE

**T**hey say that the biggest difference between men and boys is the price of their toys—and for crazed, gonzo dyed-in-the-wool videophiles that price can be high, indeed.

So what do you buy for the videophile who has everything? Let's say the videonut in your life already has several VCRs, a camera, and a mountain of videotapes. What else is left? Plenty! As long as you've got bucketfuls of money—or, barring that—a lot of imagination. There's at least a dozen gift ideas we can come up with, any one of which should satisfy most of the hardcore video buffs we know.

Take the basic video monitor. Every videophile worth his salt already has one—maybe even two or three. Naturally, it's got direct audio/video inputs, for the ultimate in sound and picture quality. What more could a videophile ask for? For starters, how about Mitsubishi's 35 inch Color Monitor? This Texas-sized set is currently the largest tube-type television in the world, beating the previous record-holder, Sony's \$7500 CVM-3000, by a good 5 inches. It also surpasses the picture quality of most



**G**oing beyond mere video is V.I.P.'s Hybrid 8: The Component Coordinator, \$797, the Video Duplicator, \$419, and the Zip Stick Controller, \$199.99. Facing page: Olympus's VX-308 camera, \$1350, Recoton's V160A tripod, \$129.95, and Olympus's 120AC light, \$74.50.

comparable projection TVs by a wide margin. Mitsubishi's set features multiple video inputs—a must for comparing different signal sources, or switching back and forth between two different VCRs—along with a 20-function remote control. It also boasts a super-high resolution of up to 560 lines. Best of all, Mitsubishi's 35 inch set sells for a mere \$3225—that's less than

\$100 a diagonal inch! In this case, we think bigger is definitely better.

Ever need to watch several different programs simultaneously? For the diehard video buff, this is a constant headache, particularly during prime-time sweeps week, when you may find yourself taping or watching as many as three different blockbuster, once-in-a-lifetime shows at

once. Sure, you could buy two or three extra TV sets and place them strategically around your video room, using them as auxiliary monitors to help cue tapes and edit out commercials. But there's no panache doing it that way!

Here's a better idea: Sony's industrial division makes a slick-looking unit, the PVM-5300, that combines three 5 inch color monitors into a single cabinet, all for a mere \$2700. Even better, each monitor is heavily shielded, to avoid leaking out interference to other nearby monitors or VCRs. They also provide special "loop-thru" jacks designed to let you dedicate each screen to a given VCR without tying up the VCR's output. For smaller budgets, Sony also makes a similar quadruple 4-inch B&W monitor, the PVN-411, a bargain at only \$1275.

Even if the videophile in your life is well-equipped with standard VCRs, we'll bet there's one kind of video deck he doesn't have: a multi-stand-unit capable of playing any of the three major worldwide video systems. The three best we've seen are JVC's BR-6400TR, Panasonic's AG-6200E and, for Beta owners, Sony's SL-T30ME. Each auto-





# Yuletide

## GIFT GUIDE

matically plays back NTSC 4.43, PAL and SECAM standards, giving you access to virtually the entire world's array of video software, TV shows and movies, and opening up a wealth of new trading opportunities with foreign videophiles.

Naturally, you'll need a triple-standard monitor on which to watch your global fare. Sony's 26-inch CVM-2711PS is the biggest we know of. It is designed to handle each system with minimal muss and fuss, and maximum picture quality, and sells for about \$1200. Be forewarned that these multi-standard products are not easy to find, except in large cities with stores that cater to the high-rolling, international crowd.

For those who have an itch to watch European tapes, but don't want to go to the expense of a dedicated monitor and foreign-standard VCR, there's a company that has just the thing for you. Instant Replay, based in Florida, modifies several current model Matsushita-type GE VCRs, and gives them the ability to play back PAL and SECAM tapes on conventional U.S. TV sets. There's some slight picture degradation of the foreign-standard image, but it's still quite watchable, and for the money—as little as \$749 for a basic two-head model—you can't beat it.

### Specialty VCRs

No matter how many video recorders your videophile friend has in his or her life, chances are good they don't



For the connoisseur: the Proton 625 monitor, \$1250, and 313 shielded speakers, \$300 a pair, the Recoton V612A Video Master Control Center, \$229.95, Zenith's VR3200 VHS Hi-Fi, \$799, and three top-quality tapes—JVC's T-120, \$9.50, Scotch's EXG Pro/T-120, \$12.99, and TDK's HD Pro VHS, T-120, \$16.95.

have a machine capable of perfect glitch-free slow-motion and picture search. To date, the only half-inch recorder with this awesome capability is Panasonic's NV-8950, a top domestic consumer machine in Japan which is sold in this country by Panasonic's industrial division. The 8950 is equipped with special vibrating "piezo" video heads, which automatically trace the video signals during playback to avoid showing any noise-bars on the screen. At nearly \$2000, this

but you just can't beat the playback quality.

### Cutting Up

Any would-be amateur video producer should know the value and importance of precise, frame-accurate editing. Good editing can make the difference between a dull, marginal production and a slick, entertaining one. The only way to edit properly is with the right equipment. JVC, Panasonic and Sony all have computer-assisted editing controllers priced near \$1000. Each is de-

signed to work with two VCRs, using one as a "slave" player and the other as a "master" recorder, allowing you to dub across desired segments and assemble them with clean, precise results.

Naturally, to go along with your semi-professional edit controller, you'll want a true "editing" VCR. Virtually no consumer VCRs are equipped with the all-important flying erase heads, which are mandatory for glitch-free insert and assemble editing. Panasonic's NV-8500 is a slick, \$3250 model that provides about every bell and whistle imaginable for the quality-conscious videophile. JVC's BR-8600 is a bit more refined, offering a heavy-duty front-loading transport for \$3000. Sony's recently-introduced GCS-50 is the only editing VCR on the market equipped with Hi-Fi audio. This Beta II-only recorder is essentially a "ruggedized"

• version of Sony's popular SL-



The Akai SS-V20 Audio Selector, \$649.95, lets you check video signal routing with a four-inch color monitor. The V20 can accommodate up to three VCRs and a disc player.



# Yuletide

## GIFT GUIDE

HF900 high-end VCR, replacing its tuner with special circuits and features for semi-professional users.

### For Camera Nuts

For those who enjoy shooting on-the-go, there's any number of accessories for jazzing up your productions. Perhaps the most often-forgotten necessity for any video camera is a lighting package. Lowell has an excellent three-light set, the \$655 Tota-Light Carry-On Kit, which works well in virtually any medium-to-small area. This package includes clamps, gaffer's tape, and even a reflector for soft "bounce" lighting.

Another important "extra" for any camera owner is a sturdy case designed to hold your camera and VCR, or camcorder. Companies like Anvil Case and Halliburton make super-strong, aluminum and plywood suitcases designed to protect sensitive electronic equipment from the worst shocks and mistreatment, up to and including being dropped down a flight of stairs. For lighter applications, Kiwi and Z-Bag offer padded bags that sling over your shoulder, making carrying VCRs and camcorders less of a back-breaking chore.

For those with an eye on making underwater epics, at least one company, Ewa, makes water-tight plastic containers designed especially for camcorders, in depths up to 100 feet. These rigs sell in the neighborhood of \$150, and are perfect for Lloyd Bridges fans who dream of producing home video remakes of *Sea Hunt* in the backyard pool.

### Black Box Bonanza

At the stratospheric price range inhabited by the true videophile, there are all kinds of video enhancers, processors and electronic doo-dads designed to help you extract every iota of quality from your

tapes. Vidicraft makes an excellent semi-professional H&V Enhancer, which crisps images both horizontally and vertically. It sells for around \$1200. It also boasts controls for varying chroma delay, to minimize the "horizontal smear effect" you get with cheaper models, and a video noise reduction circuit to reduce grain. Tape maker 3M offers a well-made processing amplifier, the P50, which stabilizes marginal recordings by adding new sync signals. It also allows you to adjust the picture contrast, brightness, color level and hue better than any consumer-level device on the market. At \$1700, it don't come cheap, but this is a true, "semi-professional" unit that nearly equals the quality of broadcast models at twice the price.

Perhaps the biggest fear of any videophile is being caught

tain level. Originally developed for computer use, power backups generally sell in the area of \$300 to \$1000, depending on capacity. Saft America's Electronics Systems Division has an excellent model, the SPS-1000, which offers surge suppression, over-current protection, voltage regulation, and built-in interference filters, and can keep an average VCR going during blackouts of up to

plugs, filters and other devices designed to reduce or eliminate the dreaded "RFI"—radio frequency interference—which often shows up on TV screens as horizontal static lines, accompanied by an audible buzzing. ESP's "Kleen Line" Magnum Filter/Spike Suppressor sells for around \$90, and can eliminate just about all of these AC hobgoblins.

**S**erious videophiles who shoot 8mm video and want to transfer to half-inch should consider Sony's RM-E100V Video Editing controller, \$180. Sony's top-line SL-HF900, \$1500, may be just the VCR for the job. Its SuperBeta and Hi-Fi features will preserve valuable footage.



by a power outage in the middle of an important off-air recording. In these energy-conscious '80's, brownouts and blackouts have become a way of life, and the only real insurance against them is the "Uninterruptible Power Supply"—a powerful battery that takes over whenever the AC line voltage drops below a cer-

30 minutes or more.

And speaking of interference: how many of you have had priceless recordings ruined due to a vacuum cleaner or electric drill running nearby? Videophiles, rejoice. Help is on the way, from the video interference-busters at Electronic Specialties Products. This firm specializes in a variety of jacks,

### Tying It Together

Okay. So your videophile friend has three VCRs, a couple of monitors, and all the above accessories. Without even looking at it, I'll bet the cables that tie this entire system together resemble a "rat's nest" of confusion! What's the

*continued on page 182*

A black Realistic Model 40 VCR is shown from a slightly elevated angle, resting on a blue surface with a white grid pattern. The VCR has a silver faceplate with "VHS" and "HI-FI STEREO" printed on it. Below the tape slot, there's a digital display and several control buttons. To the right of the tape slot, there are more buttons including "PLAY", "STOP", "REWIND", "PAUSE/STILL", "F.WIND", and "RECORD". A "RECORDING LEVEL" meter is on the far right. A black remote control with a red "PLAY" button and other controls is lying in front of the VCR. The background is a dark, textured surface.

# Get a Great Picture and Spectacular Stereo Sound With Radio Shack's New VCRs





Much more than ordinary VCRs! Both of these new front-loading VHS decks give you a superb picture, extra features for easy operation, and the amazing difference of stereo TV sound. MTS stereo-TV tuners are built in, so you don't need an adapter. Just connect either model to your stereo system and start enjoying what you've been missing on TV/FM simulcasts, stereo TV broadcasts and prerecorded tapes.

**Realistic® Model-40 VHS Hi-Fi Stereo** is the finest VCR we've ever offered, with a 105-channel cable-ready tuner, wireless remote, and 14-day, three-event timer. Our convenient Quick-Timer Recording feature lets you start a timed recording by pressing just on button. The VCR stops at your preselected time, which you can extend while you record. Backspace editor gives you jump-free results when you edit unwanted material. And, with the flip of a switch, this VCR becomes a long-play audio recorder with sound quality that rivals compact disc! It's the VCR for *total* entertainment. \$699.95 or as low as \$33 per month on Radio Shack/CitiLine credit.

**Realistic Model-30 VHS Stereo** features a 14-day, two-event timer, 105-channel cable-ready tuner, wireless remote, quick-timer recording and backspace editor. Built-in Dolby® system reduces tape "hiss" and expands dynamic range. It's the heart of a *first-class* audio/video system. \$599.95 or as low as \$28 per month on Radio Shack/CitiLine credit.

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# INSIDE 'THE FRENCH

## A Complex Film Reveals Itself With the Help of a VCR

**R**ecent surveys show that a growing number of people are renting and buying one of the most important titles of the last decade, the feature-film version of John Fowles's wise and subtle best-selling novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Directed by Karel Reisz with Meryl Streep and Jeremy Irons in the lead roles, the film was released theatrically in late 1981 and is now available on cassette (CBS/Fox 4586). It deserves multiple viewings and repays the effort needed to appreciate it fully. VCR owners will be especially rewarded, for the film's nuances of theme—through dialogue, acting and direction—suffer no diminishment in transference to the small screen. In fact, the VCR's ability to pause, rewind and fast forward through scenes makes it the perfect vehicle for viewing this densely textured film.

Harold Pinter's multi-dimensional screenplay—"a final miracle" as Fowles himself says—shares the novel's sense of a human mismanagement of time and sensibility and of the human inclination to believe in every era that we are evolution's ultimate achievement.

*The French Lieutenant's Woman* con-

BY DONALD SPOTO



# LIEUTENANT'S WOMAN'

cerns Charles Smithson (played by Jeremy Irons), an English gentleman and paleontologist in the time of Darwin and Dickens. While engaged to Ernestina Freeman (Linsay Baxter), he becomes fascinated and finally obsessed with Sara Woodruff (Meryl Streep), a figure of tragic gloom who is usually found gazing out to sea, awaiting the return of the French lieutenant who abandoned her and whose "woman" she is reputed to be.

Drawn by the woman's mysteriously beautiful manner to penetrate her melancholy, self-imposed isolation, he hears from her the story of her brief romance that ended in a forlorn social ostracism. Fearing for her safety and his own reputation, Charles sends Sarah away, offering money to help support her. He follows and, after he has made love to her in a moment of wild passion, Sarah reveals that the French lieutenant was a man she beheld from afar. He was never her lover. Charles is the first man with whom she has been intimate.

Determined to sacrifice everything for his new love, Charles breaks his engagement to Ernestina. But when he returns for Sarah, she has departed. After three years of public disgrace and loveless wandering, he finally locates her. The story concludes at an ambiguous reunion, in which anger collides with resentment, confusion with yearning, and lingering love with the need for forgiveness.

Intertwined with this story is an account of the two actors, Mike and Anna (also portrayed by Jeremy Irons and Meryl Streep), who are playing Charles and Sarah in the film version of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* that we are in fact watching. During the location shooting, they become lovers. We learn, however, that Mike is already a husband and father, and that Anna is committed to a Frenchman named David.

At the end of *their* story—and of the

CBS/Fox Video



story they are filming—Mike presses for a confrontation with Anna just as they are about to film the ambiguous conclusion to *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Anna avoids a last meeting, and leaves the end-of-filming party with Mike calling after her, crying "Sarah!" as her car speeds away.

### Double Couples

The most important and carefully rendered aspect of this double plot is the one most likely to be misperceived—namely, that the Victorian couple, Sarah and Charles, are not simply "performed" by the moderns, Anna and Mike. They *are* Anna and Mike, and Anna and Mike *are* the Victorian couple. The film they are making, and the film we are watching, is itself—as *film*—the metaphor by which the couples are identified, and the marker by which the contours of the relationship are defined. By a relentless accumulation of successive scenes in which dialogue, camera angle and movement establish that identification, the film goes far beyond the simple conventions of a "movie-within-a-movie."

In the first (pre-credit) scene, we are shown that the Victorian character we see is really a modern film actress. This is the single most direct clue: there is no clear distinction between Sarah and Charles on one side of time, and Anna and Mike on the other. In the art they make, they *perform* characters, but in their lives they *are* the characters.

Both stories are essentially a single story. The editing and the overlapping of action and dialogue clarify this. It is the meaning, for example, of the scene in which Mike notices Anna's sadness as they recline on the rocky beach and she gazes toward the Undercliff where, as Sarah, she walks alone. It is the meaning of the scene in which Mike says he wants Anna, and she replies, "You just had me—in Exeter", following the love scene of the Victorian couple they portray. It is the meaning of Charles' avid tennis game with his London solicitor, balanced later by the half-hearted tennis game in Mike's garden.

It is the meaning of the scene in which Anna and Mike rehearse the first meeting of Sarah and Charles, the scene of Sarah's stumbling. The actors rehearse in an enclosed garden as rain falls outside. As they practice the scene—for a second time, because Anna has fallen rather awkwardly and hurt her leg—the film cuts to Sarah and Charles 'living out' that scene. At this point we suddenly realize Sarah and Charles have become for us much 'more real' than the actors rehearsing and portraying them.

The image of the enclosed garden is central to the film, as we shall see; and the exterior rain recalls the Victorian lovers' first view of each other on the windswept pier. This image is repeated when Charles, in a violent rainstorm, seeks the eminent Darwinian Dr. Grogan (Leo McKern) to discuss his half-understood fears and feelings about his "woman of mystery" and,

again, when we see Sarah tossed in the same storm.

This identity between the sets of couples is reinforced by the associations between Victorian and modern repressions. Asked by her prospective employer, Mrs. Poulteney (Patience Collier), to read from the Bible, Sarah is at once replaced on the screen by Anna, who reads to Mike—not the Scriptures, but cold, historical fact, the social background to their film. In Victorian London, she announces, prostitutes received two million callers a week at a time when the adult male population was one million.

The Victorian scenes suggest a measured, ordered and civilized life, while the modern scenes are full of noise and lack restraint. But at one of its most provocative levels, the film suggests that Victorian reticence and apparent repression were neither better nor worse than modern disarticulation and the appearance of liberation. The modern couples (Anna and David, Mike and his wife Sonia) hardly communicate with each other more than

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*The Victorian couple, Sarah and Charles, are not simply 'performed' by Anna and Mike. They are Anna and Mike.*

---

the Victorians, and usually a good deal less. There is little to recommend the awkward pauses and silences that punctuate the discomfort Anna and Mike feel when they are apparently most intimate.

### Through the Looking Glass

The first shot of the film is of a hooded woman, whose face we see reflected in a small, round hand-mirror. We are not sure where we are or what is happening until the camera pulls back. It is Anna, whose makeup is being adjusted for a scene. Directions are called, the filming proceeds, and the actress strides through her assigned scene, playing Sarah, walking along the stone pier of Lyme harbor. In the last moments of the film, we watch as Anna, now without costume or makeup, gazes into another mirror, her confused glance full of unasked questions. From Anna-made-up-as-Sarah we move to Anna-unmasked (indeed, Anna-about-to-vanish, as Sarah did).

At the midpoint of the film, we see Sarah staring at herself in the Victorian vanity mirror as she tries to capture on a sketchpad the contours of the sadness in her own face. Indeed, the whole production is remarkable for its structural symmetry and richly consistent use of objects, glances and gestures as markers or motifs for

deeper ideas.

Charles and Sarah are both seekers in the past and amid the past. He scours fossils for the scientific truth about the arc of human history, while she seeks in a romantic, imagined past. Once they meet and are finally sexually joined, the illusion of her past romance can be admitted and abandoned. From this point, their destinies are transferred, and their seeking in the past wrenches them more and more into the present lives of Anna and Mike. Sarah is freed of her illusion, but it is then Charles's destiny to endure the life of melancholy searching that once defined *her*.

Sarah's long monologue in the forest, in which she tells Charles about her 'affair' with the French lieutenant, is also an important hinge for the situation of the 'outcast' from a polite but narrow, closed society. Sarah achieves this condition by the strange paradox of an invented sin—and it is her final legacy to Charles, who takes up the pattern of her former life, becoming an outcast and wanderer, publicly disgraced for "criminal selfishness, lust and a clandestine liaison."

At the last he espouses the romanticism that once fascinated him in Sarah. Attracted by her Gothic sense of isolated longing, he is drawn even more deeply to her after she tells him her romance was a fiction, even when she suggests that he may not, and perhaps should not, return to her. "I ask nothing of you," she says. "Do what you will. Or what you must. Now that I know there was truly a day you loved me, I can bear anything. You have given me the strength to love."

The roles then begin their ineluctable reversal. Sarah has been freed of her illusion by achieving her illusion. "I wished it so. I wished it so," she tells Charles. "I have long imagined a day such as this. I have longed for it. I was lost from the moment I saw you." And Charles replies, "I too."

All that then remains is for *him* to become the one gazing out to sea, photographed in a shimmering, haunting composition that duplicates Claude Monet's *Terrace at Sainte-Adresse*, painted the same time as the story-setting. When he finally pursues his illusion, he finds that *he* has become the independent thinker. Her hard, anguished sketches of her own unhappy face have been replaced in her new life by gentler drawings of others' faces.

### Hot and Cool

So it is that Charles Smithson brings his scientism and intellect to balance Sarah's passionate misery, only to find she tempers his cool intellect with the fire of imagination. In this regard, the two characters, like Mike and Anna, are also aspects of a single personality. They evoke the extremes of reason and imagination that always conflict. This is perhaps why their sexual coupling—brief, slightly brutish, and somewhat adolescent, as if their pas-

*continued on page 183*



In 'The French Lieutenant's Woman,' Charles Smithson, played by Jeremy Irons, brings his scientism to balance the passionate misery of Sarah, played by Meryl Streep, only to find that she tempers his cool intellect with the fires of imagination. The two characters, like Mike and Anna, their contemporary equivalents in the story, are also aspects of a single personality, evoking extremes of reason and imagination that are always in conflict. They are framed by Bible-thumping Mrs. Poulteney (top middle) who stands for an angry Victorian morality as empty of human feeling as the smug Darwinism of Dr. Grogan (bottom right). Servants Sam and May (top right and bottom middle) act as surrogates for Charles and Sarah, speaking about freedom and eager for lives of their own.









# THE EXPLOSION IN LOW- COST VCRs

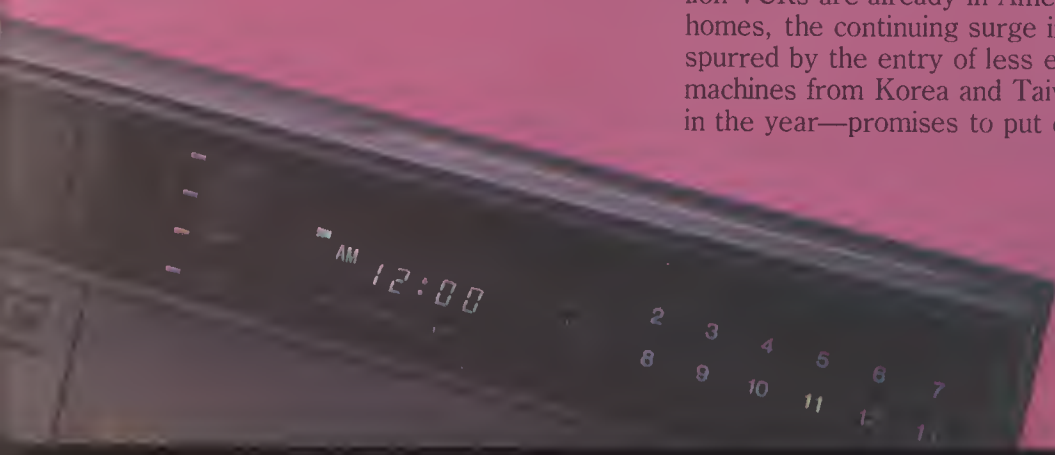
BY ROD WOODCOCK

Never Have  
So Many  
Sold So Much  
For So Little

**T**he VCR revolution has taken the electronics world by storm. So many VCRs are now sold that every letter of the alphabet except "X" has been used for a brand name. The way things are going, it won't be long before the inevitable "Brand X" makes its debut as well.

While it's estimated that nearly 20 million VCRs are already in American homes, the continuing surge in sales—spurred by the entry of less expensive machines from Korea and Taiwan earlier in the year—promises to put even more

Photos by Jim Porio



machines in the home before the year is out. With prices on base model Beta and VHS machines hovering around \$200 or less in many areas, home VCRs have evolved from luxury goods to electronic bargains.

Last year I pegged the price of a budget VCR at \$500 or less. For this year's chart, however, I revised the category to reflect the trend toward lower VCR prices across the board, and pegged budget machines in the under-\$400 price range, including one or two of the least expensive machines that are available from more than 50 companies.

The chart omits prices because VCR makers often do not suggest list prices for their economy models, leaving the decision to dealers. Where prices are clear, discounts ranging from a slim 10 to a fat 40 percent, in high-tech hotspots like New

York City and Los Angeles, make comparisons based on list price a questionable exercise. The same \$400 VCR can cost a consumer from \$240 to \$360.

Prices have become so attractive on many machines, in fact, that they attract more than just first-time buyers. Veteran videophiles are now buying second and third machines to augment or replace the ones they initially bought a few years ago. There are lots of advantages to owning more than one VCR. The most obvious, of course, is insurance. If one machine suddenly coughs and dies just before you're going to tape that favorite movie, you've always got the other VCR. Another idea is to dedicate each machine to a different purpose. One deck can be used strictly for recording programs off cable TV, for example, while the other one can be connected to an external roof antenna so you can

receive off-air VHF and UHF broadcasts.

If the two machines are located side-by-side in the same equipment bay, you can also use them jointly to edit and copy other videotapes. Many enthusiasts who want to compile a library of commercial-free movies, and don't trust those automatic commercial cutters, record the movie with the commercials when it's first aired then copy it to another tape later on to remove the commercials. The same technique, of course, can be used to compile a "library" tape of other short clips or segments you may want to save, whether it's news footage about the Space Shuttle or high-tech commercials.

### What to Look For

Whether you're a first time buyer or a video veteran, try to narrow your choice before you head to the store. The first

## Economical VCRs

BRAND	MODEL	FORMAT	HEADS	SPEEDS	TUNER	CHANNELS
Akai	VS-303	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	16 Presets	105
Curtis Mathes	MV-730	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	14 Presets	82
Dumont	DVT-8500R	VHS	2	SP, LP, SP	12 Presets	105
Emerson	VCR-870	VHS	2	SP, EP, (Plays LP)	12 Presets	105
Fisher	FVH-715	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	12 Presets	105
General Electric	1VCR6002X	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	14 Presets	82
Goldstar	GHV-41FM	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	12 Presets	105
Hitachi	VT-62A	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	80 Position Voltage Synthesized	107
J.C. Penney	5071	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	14 Presets	107
JVC	HRD-131	VHS	4	SP, EP, (Plays LP)	12 Presets	82
KMC (K-Mart)	KMV-15SH	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	12 Presets	82
Lloyds	838	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	Voltage Synthesized	105
Magnavox	VR-8510	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	14 Presets	82
Marantz	VR-250	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	16 Presets Voltage Synthesized	105
Mitsubishi	HS-318UR	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	16 Presets Voltage Synthesized	105
NEC	N901EU	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	16 Presets	105
Panasonic	PV-1330	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	14 Presets	82
Philco	V-1320	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	14 Presets	107
Pilot	VCR-900	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	12 Presets	105
Quasar	VH-5151	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	14 Presets	82



consideration is which format to choose: VHS or Beta? (In the absence of a large selection of prerecorded programming, let's leave the half-inch vs. 8mm question out of the deliberations.) If you've already got one or two machines of either format, your decision is easy—stay with what you already own. The overwhelming popularity of VHS means a far greater selection in that format than in Beta. While more people now own VCRs of both formats, more owners who started out with Beta are adding VHS machines to insure compatibility with the format many of their friends own, and to make it easier to rent movies, now that increasing numbers of video stores carry only VHS cassettes.

That problem shouldn't affect the first-time buyer—if you're buying to rent and view movies, you're better off with VHS since Beta programming—while still being

produced by the program labels—is still much harder to find at many video stores around the country. Apart from that, Beta is as good and in many ways better than VHS, especially when it comes to picture quality. So if you're planning to use your VCR for extensive time-shifting of TV broadcasts, don't give the minority format short-shrift.

Whether you go Beta or VHS, it's important to get the features you want. Here's a quick run-down of what to look for.

### Tape Speeds and Economy

Most VHS machines record and play back tapes at three speeds: SP, LP, and SLP (a.k.a. EP). SP stands for Standard Play, the speed at which the tape moves the fastest and lasts the least amount of time. Blank tapes are sold according to this standard speed reference; T-120, for ex-

ample, is a two-hour tape. All prerecorded movies are duplicated at this speed—not only because it offers the highest audio and video quality, but because this is the one speed every VHS machine ever made will always have.

The LP (Long Play) speed is found on some brands of VCR but not on others. You won't find it on machines made by JVC, Zenith, Emerson, or Toshiba, for example, except as a playback speed—there's no LP recording. Instead the machines offer Extended Play (EP) or Super Long Play (SLP) recording, where a T-120 blank tape will last three times as long—six hours. With these VCRs, therefore, you've got a choice of recording at the fastest or slowest speed. Almost all other brands record at the midrange LP speed as well, and since video and audio quality can be slightly better here than at EP (you've got to be the

PICTURE SEARCH	STILL FRAME	FRAME ADVANCE	SLOW MOTION	TIMER	REMOTE CONTROL	OTHER FEATURES
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4 Event/28 Day	16 Function Wireless	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 Event/14 Day	5 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4 Event/21 Day	9 Function Wireless	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4 Event/14 Day	11 Function Wireless	Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	No	No	No	1 Event/9 Day	9 Function Wireless	Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 Event/14 Day	5 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	No	No	2 Event/14 Day	6 Function Wired	Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	No	No	4 Event/14 Day	10 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 Event/14 Day	10 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1 Event/14 Day	Wireless Remote	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	No	No	No	1 Event/7 Day	Wired Remote Pause	Counter Memory
Yes	Yes	No	No	4 Event/21 Day	11 Function Wireless	Counter Memory
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 Event/14 Day	5 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4 Event/21 Day	Wireless	Dolby Stereo, MTS, One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	No	No	4 Event/14 Day	12 Function Wireless	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	2 Event/21 Day	11 Function Wired Remote	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 Event/14 Day	10 Function Wired	Double Speed Play, One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 Event/14 Day	10 Function Wired Remote	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4 Event/14 Day	Wireless	Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 Event/14 Day	5 Function Wired Remote	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control



judge of that), you might want to select a full-featured three-speed deck instead of the two-speed versions.

Beta machines have only two speeds to contend with; BII and BIII. The original Beta I speed is now almost extinct although Sony preserves it as a playback-only speed on even the cheapest Betamax, like the SL-10 included in the chart. On a tape-for-tape basis, most commonly available VHS T-120 blank tapes and the Beta L-750s both sell for about the same price. The T-120 will hold 6 hours of programming compared to only 4-1/2 for Beta at the slowest speeds, so if quantity is what you're looking for, VHS is the right choice. On the other hand, Beta's slow-speed picture quality is slightly better and the cassettes are slightly smaller. Longer tapes are available for both formats. The VHS T-160 tape delivers up to eight hours at the

slowest speed while Beta's L-830 can deliver five. But both tapes cost more than the popular VHS T-120 and Beta L-750 lengths (two and three hours, respectively, at the fastest speeds), and are sometimes harder to find in stores.

### Visible Picture Search

This popular feature is now standard on every VCR sold regardless of price. But watch out for a few wrinkles here and there. Since most inexpensive VHS machines only use two video heads (compared to four or more on deluxe units), you'll often find that the search mode—as well as such special effects as still frame, frame advance and slow motion (if offered)—work well only with tapes made at the slowest speed. Picture search at SP is filled with wide bands of white video noise, making the picture almost impossible to

see. Ditto for special effects.

Some Beta machines exhibit a similar effect. Most of the cheaper Sanyos are optimized for BIII tapes and scan the faster BII tapes very poorly. Sony machines, on the other hand, offer clear scan at either speed even on the low-priced SL-10 budget Betamax.

### Remote Control

As with picture search, manufacturers have discovered that potential video buyers are sold on remote control, a "must have" feature. But a lot of the less expensive machines still use wired remote controls that plug into a socket on the front of the machine. Nothing wrong with that—except for the inevitable tangled wire. The simplest of these wired remotes offers only still/pause and forward and reverse picture search. Still others have a

## Economical VCRs

BRAND	MODEL	FORMAT	HEADS	SPEEDS	TUNER	CHANNELS
Realistic / Radio Shack	15	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	12 Presets	105
RCA	VLT-260	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	80 Position Voltage Synthesized	82
Sampo	VR-9500	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	12 Presets	105
Samsung	VT-210T	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	12 Presets	82
Sansui	SVR-5500	VHS	4	SP, LP, (Plays LP)	12 Presets	82
Sanyo	VCR-4010	Beta	2	BII, BIII	12 Presets	82
Sears	53072	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	12 Presets	82
Sears	5309	Beta	2	BII, BIII	12 Presets	82
Sharp	VC-582U	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	12 Presets	108
Sony	SL-10	Beta	2	BII, BIII (Plays BI)	14 Presets	82
Supra	SV-18	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	12 Presets	105
Sylvania	VC-2233	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	14 Presets	82
Symphonic	VCR-4007	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	12 Presets	105
Tatung	VR-8300U	VHS	4	SP, EP (Plays LP)	12 Presets	82
Teknika	VCR-571	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	14 Presets	82
Toshiba	M-5000	VHS	2	SP, EP (Plays LP)	12 Presets	117
Toshiba	VM-41	Beta	2	BII, BIII	12 Presets	105
TMK	2055	VHS	2	SP, EP (Plays LP)	12 Presets	105
Unitech	SSV-1000	VHS	2	SP, LP, SLP	12 Presets	82
Vector Research	V-2000	VHS	2	SP, LP, EP	16 Position Voltage Synthesized	105
Zenith	VR-1800	VHS	2	SP, EP (Plays LP)	Voltage Synthesized	82



more extensive menu of full-function controls. With these, you can operate almost all of the machine's functions from the end of the remote, getting out of your chair only when you have to change cassettes.

Wireless remote controls are more convenient since there's no cord to trip over. But even here, there's quite a range of features that you'll find on the remote for one machine compared to an almost identical machine of the same brand. Keep that in mind if you're tempted to go beyond your budget and invest in a machine that, while mechanically identical to a cheaper model, offers only a few extra remote control features that you could probably live without.

## Timers

An important part of any VCR is the programmable timer—the thing that turns it on and off to tape TV shows when you're

not at home or doing something else. A lot of the cheapest models have only one-shot timers. With these you can record a single show on one preselected channel, often as much as two weeks in advance. Some others increase that versatility to two shows in two weeks, and a few others to as many as seven shows in two weeks.

Depending on what you want to tape, and how often, pick a timer that's versatile enough for your needs and not too complex or time-consuming to set up. Note also that while many of the simpler timers are billed as "one event" timers, they are actually more versatile. As long as the show you're taping airs at the same time on the same channel each day, the timer will turn the VCR on and off daily until the tape runs out. Salespeople often overlook that "serial" capability.

Every tabletop VCR includes a separate

tuner. Without it you wouldn't be able to record a show on one channel while using the separate tuner on your TV to watch something else. Tuner designs vary a lot. Fortunately, old-fashioned knob-type tuners have given way to electronic pushbuttons or more sophisticated designs even on the cheapest machines. What you need to know is how many channels the tuner can pick up and record. All receive the 82 basic VHF and UHF frequencies commonly used by over-the-air broadcasters around the country. A few more "cable capable" VCRs have tuners that get an extra dozen "mid-band" channels often used by cable companies. VCR makers once described these VCRs as being "cable ready." Unfortunately, too many people got the erroneous impression that buying a so-called cable-ready VCR was all you needed to get

*continued on page 187*

PICTURE SEARCH	STILL FRAME	FRAME ADVANCE	SLOW MOTION	TIMER	REMOTE CONTROL	OTHER FEATURES
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Event/14 Day	9 Function Wireless	One Touch Record, Counter Memory
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Day/1 Event	9 Function Wireless	One Touch Record, Counter Memory
Yes	Yes	No	No	3 Event/14 Day	9 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Event/7 Day	9 Function Wired	Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Event/14 Day	Wireless Remote	Dolby Stereo, Simulcast Mode, One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Event/7 Day	8 Function Wired Remote	Beto Hi-Fi Stereo, Counter Memory
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1 Event/9 Day	Wired Remote Control	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Event/3 Day	Wired Remote Control	Counter Memory
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Event/7 Day	8 Function Wired	Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	No	No	6 Event/7 Day	4 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Event/14 Day	9 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 Event/14 Day	5 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Event/14 Day	9 Function Wired	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	No	No	1 Event/14 Day	9 Function Wireless	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 Event/14 Day	5 Function Wired Remote	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 Event/7 Day	15 Function Wireless	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1 Event/7 Day	10 Function Wired	Counter Memory
Yes	No	No	No	1 Event/14 Day	5 Function Wired	Counter Memory, Auto Rewind, Sharpness Control
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1 Event/7 Day	9 Function Wired Remote	Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	No	No	4 Event/21 Day	Wireless Remote Control	One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind
Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1 Event/14 Day	12 Function Wireless	Zenith TV Control, One Touch Record, Counter Memory, Auto Rewind



# Darkest Africa's Lightest Camera

**I**t was late one afternoon in the Amboseli National Reserve in Kenya, East Africa. About 150 yards from our microbus a pride of four lions was sneaking up on a small herd of grazing wildebeest. Slowly, deliberately, they moved closer and closer. I held the Sony CCD-V8 8mm camcorder up to my eye knowing the attack might erupt at any moment. More than an hour passed. The wildebeest drifted away. I got bored, but not uncomfortable.

Suddenly, the lions sprang. I hit the Record button and the V8 started rolling immediately. The ladies—male lions seldom hunt—were after a small civet cat. One lion whacked the cat



# A Professional Cameraman Tests an 8mm Camcorder on a Kenyan Safari



By Ronald L. Phillips



Photo courtesy Image Bank/ Inset photo by Vittorio Sartor



# Shanghai Meets The Sony

By Jeffrey Frey

Shanghai conjures up images of monumental prewar European buildings crumbling romantically in the fog, of once luxurious stores reduced by socialist uniformity to selling limited lines of inexpensive products under the glare of naked bulbs, of ranks of Chinese exercising in the morning mist along the Bund. So when a trip to Shanghai emerged on my horizon, I knew I would have to take a video recorder along.

The first question was what kind? I have a VHS portable I use mostly for time shifting, but a previous expedition with a borrowed camera to the Tsukuba Fair—while it yielded good results—left me rather heavily laden. I checked out the National (Matsushita) and Hitachi full-size VHS camcorders, but felt they would be almost as much of a pain to carry as the two-piece system. Besides, I didn't want to lug around a couple of those big VHS cassettes.

I looked at the JVC VHSC Movicam. It's compact and light and the cassettes themselves are relatively compact—but because of their 20-minute length I would have to carry a lot of them. I believe, with Charles Lindbergh, that if you can't carry something in your raincoat pockets, you shouldn't be traveling with it. I was facing a dilemma. How could I travel light without sacrificing the video capability I wanted?

Yes, I thought of 8mm, but after all I did have a VHS at home. The 8mms have some nice features such as CCD sensors and AFM hi-fi sound. In Japan, where I live, the only available 8mm equipment is Sony's; Sony-made camcorders are also sold by Kyocera and Pioneer with slight exterior design changes. Their attraction was their low weight as well as the lightness and small size of their 8mm cassettes. The CCD pickup promised extra ruggedness, longer intervals between battery charges, and no worries over burn-in and smear.

Unfortunately none of the 8mm units

I saw had auto focus—but my experience at Tsukuba with an auto-focus unit that got confused in dim light made me suspicious of the feature anyway. Technologically speaking, 8mm seemed way ahead of anything in its price range.

Since all the camcorders I looked at cost about the same, the problem was compatibility. But that disappeared when I looked at the quality of the images produced by the Sony CCD-V8 at SP speed, and noticed that Sony already had announced an 8mm deck with a

*I was facing a dilemma. How could I travel light without sacrificing the video capability that I wanted?*

slower LP speed. After that, both VHS and Beta seemed dead. After all, two 8mm cassettes would provide eight hours of play with at least the same video quality, and much better audio quality—and they would occupy less than one-quarter the space of a VHS cassette. My VHS cassettes now seemed big and clumsy.

I could carry two battery packs and a recharger, but what were the voltage and plug standards in China? My research showed that almost anything was possible: 110 or 220 volts, and five different plug types. I decided to take only two adapter plugs (the continental two-pin and British three-pin) to mate with the American/Japanese standard two-pin plug on the Sony recharger, and a 220/100V 18-watt stepdown transformer. The Sony recharger is rated at 25 watts but the next-size

transformer is a much heavier 50 watts, and I thought I could survive by recharging only one battery pack at a time. As it was, the Shanghai Hotel where I stayed had 220V pin-plug sockets plus a 220V universal shaver socket into which I plugged my transformer.

The Sony 8mm camcorders have plastic covers that protect their delicate frontal parts when traveling. So protected, they are reduced to rectangular volumes with the battery holder/handle protruding from one side. They fit neatly into a compact rectangular foam-protected soft shoulder bag. I further protected my new pride and joy during travel by stuffing socks and underwear around it. A couple of 120-minute cassettes fit into the front case pocket. On my other shoulder was a similar-size bag with the second battery pack and recharger, a 35mm SLR camera and film, and a few other necessities.

The pictures I took in Shanghai came out wonderfully: shots into the sun at dawn over the hazy Huang Po waterfront, Chinese exercising along the Bund, stonework and other details of the great buildings, the incessant flow of pedestrians, bicycles, and articulated buses along Nanking Road. They all bring back the feel of the city.

The 19-lux sensitivity of the CCD pickup let me take pictures of the activity inside the Number 1 Department Store, and I used the macro position on the zoom lens to capture details, both beautiful and garish, of the craftwork for sale at the Friendship Store. Unfortunately, 19 lux wasn't enough to satisfactorily capture, under Christmas tree lights, the bored expressions of the elderly jazz tooters in the bar of the Peach Hotel (formerly the Cathay), but the recorded sound transmits the feeling well enough.

I'll admit it: I was not much of a video freak before, but the compactness, convenience, and creative possibilities of the 8mm equipment I used got me interested. Now if only I had a camera with interchangeable lenses, a digital editor, and another deck.



with a clawed paw, but it got away without serious damage.

Trying to tape that scene with my half-inch camera and recorder would have been disaster. My arm would have grown numb from the camera's weight and I would have lost half the action waiting for the recorder to get up to speed.

Likewise, few camera/recorder setups or even one-piece camcorders would likely stand up to the abuse I gave the V8. If you were a camcorder, you'd hate an African safari. You're constantly slammed around. The light is either blinding-bright out in the open or doom-black in the forests. You'd long for a nice dull piano recital back home. But while the Sony didn't completely beat the bush, it came darned close.

The Sony CCD-V8 is the first "sight and shoot" camcorder I've seen that deserves the title. It's marvelously simple—small, too, but not too small to operate smoothly. It's only five-plus pounds including battery but its fine balance makes it feel comfortably solid (Sony's new Mini-8 is even smaller and lighter, but it doesn't have all the features of its big brother). Sony's 8mm tape cartridges are scarcely larger than audio cassettes, so they're easier to haul around than bulky half-inch cassettes. Three 8mm cassettes fit easily in a pocket of my baseball jacket. (Imagine what I could have fit into an honest-to-goodness Safari jacket.) And the Sony is easy to learn. My wife Linda, who has had problems working electric can openers, mastered it. Kenyon, our 10-year-old son, was an instant whiz.

Another snazzy feature of the Sony is instant playback. This is especially handy when recording fast-breaking action. Hippos, for example, stay underwater for minutes at a time. Then, when you least expect it, they pop their snouts out of the water and let out a thunderous snort. This was comic relief and I really wanted to get it. But I never knew while recording if I was fast enough. It was easy to tell with the Sony. Simply flick a switch and the last few recorded seconds are played back in the viewfinder. (Of course, you can play back more than a few seconds. The rear of the V8 has the same controls you'll find on any VCR. You can speed-search any amount of program material and screen it through the viewfinder. There's also an input for earphones, so you can hear audio playback as well.)

### Tricks of the Trek

While we're on the subject of audio, it's one of the Sony's most unique features—its AFM audio is much like Beta or VHS Hi-Fi except mono. We stopped for

*Ron Phillips is a director/cameraman with The Film Tree in Los Angeles and New York. His commercials have won every major industry award including a Cannes Silver Eagle. He has directed one feature film, FunnyCar Summer, and an HBO special, Circus.*

gas at a border town and found a busy native market right next door. I recorded Linda negotiating for local jewelry with a lot of excited Masai natives. I couldn't hear anything but shouting at the time, but on playback the sound is quite clear. You can even hear a Masai (with a plastic 35mm film holder in her earlobe) ask Linda if she was paying by cash or American Express.

I was impressed by Sony's resolution and color at very low light levels—even eight footcandles. This let us capture one of the most memorable yet terrifying experiences of our trip. We were high in the Aberderes Mountains at a lodge called The Ark. It sits smack over a watering hole and is designed so you can observe wildlife without them seeing you.

In the middle of the night we were awakened by an incredible drama. There was very little light, but we could make out two black rhinos, mother and baby, at the salt lick. Darting back and forth, an ever-expanding pack of hyenas was trying to maneuver the baby rhino from its mother. (Hyenas aren't just scavengers, they're among the most vicious predators in Africa.) For more than an hour we watched with mingled horror and fascination. Mom finally led baby safely away and the ghoulish hyenas slinked off.

The pictures I recorded weren't very good—but they were much better than ex-

pected because of Sony's CCD (charge coupled device) image sensor. CCD is also on Sony's professional Betacam and Super-Beta cameras. Simply put, CCD replaces old-fashioned vacuum tubes. It eliminates the "lag" or streaks you get with most cameras at low light levels. It also records cooler, truer color—without strident, saturated magenta.

I was delighted the Sony had no automatic focus (though a new updated model, CCD-V8AFU, does have it). To me, auto focus is one of life's great nuisances. It's so noisy, it contaminates audio. If you try to frame a shot through an interesting foreground object, it focuses on the wrong thing. For example, I was taping a playful lion cub bugging his sleeping parents. Mom and dad were foreground, baby quite a bit back. The larger mass was the parents—and that's what auto focus would feature. But the real visual interest lay in the parents forming regal soft-focus bookends around the cub. I not only wouldn't have gotten the shot with automatic focusing, I might never have "seen" it. Automatic focusing can make you lazy.

A surreal experience really impressed me with the way the V8 is put together. We were on a game drive in Samburu. Far in the west, the sky radiated a golden glow. We raced to see what it was. We discov-

*continued on page 192*

Ron Phillips



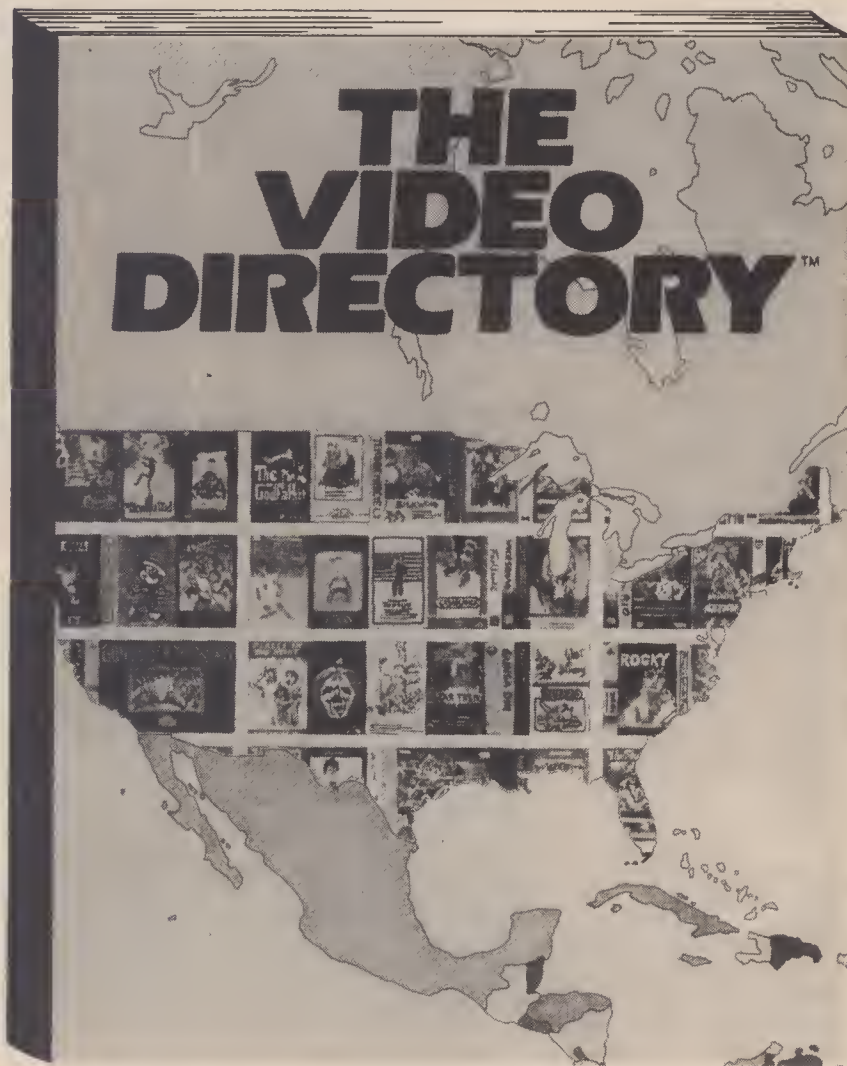
*Big game shooting in Kenya: Stills from the author's Sony safari*



**Q:**

# HOW CAN I FIND OUT WHAT'S ON VIDEO CASSETTE?

**A:**



Everything you always wanted to know about what's available on video cassette, but didn't know who to ask is finally all in one place: **THE VIDEO DIRECTORY**. What's the title, what's the plot, who are the stars, who directed, how long is it, when did it come out, how much does it cost...it's all here! Hundreds of pages of the most current information you want, with special listings of video discs, adult video titles, a cross reference of actors and directors, and much more!

**Q:**

So how do I get a copy?

**A:**

Send \$8.95 (plus \$3.00 postage and handling) check or money order, to:  
ART AD HOUSE, Mail Order Department 500, 430 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019  
Sorry, no C.O.D.



# AND THE WINNERS ARE...



McCord



Brogan

## We Answer the Toughest Video Trivia Quiz

Triviasts, raise a glass to George McCord, winner of the contest we sponsored to show off our "World's Hardest Video Trivia Quiz" (VIDEO, May 1985). Beverley Bare Buehrer, author of the "Quiz," did her best to stump our readers but George was just too quick for her—even if it *did* take him 12 days to finish the thing. Yes, he scored 100.

The only other contestant to accomplish the feat was Dennis Brogan, first runner-up. Sorry Dennis!—your entry was postmarked 22 April, a day later than George's. One other contestant (Beverly Hershey) scored 99; 10 others scored 98; 6 scored 97; and the remainder scored from 96 all the way down to 0—yes, the big zero. (We won't mention who *that* was.)

McCord, 41, is a lawyer specializing in real estate. Trivia contests are a passion for him: he also recently won one sponsored by the *Chicago Tribune*. Not that ours was without drama. "There's always a degree of mystery," he says—"wondering if you're the earliest postmark." In this case he squeaked by.

The hardest question, he told us, was Number 34: "At what Italian restaurant do James Roberts and Diane Lawson meet for a date in *Hard to Hold*?" (When one of our editors watched this movie, ironically, he turned it off right at the beginning of this very scene out of boredom.) The name of the restaurant ran backwards onscreen so McCord did a little fact-checking and called the restaurant to confirm the spelling. "I

enjoyed the research aspect of it," he says. "It's a great way to educate yourself about movies." For his scrupulousness McCord wins the RCA Dimensia supersystem, an everything-but-the-kitchen-sink concoction worth \$5000. We'd say he deserves it.

"The signs are already up in the store saying 'Denny does it again'," says runner-up Dennis Brogan, who works in a video store and is about to become the owner of an RCA "Small Wonder" camera. Brogan is another veteran of the trivia wars, having won \$10,000 in the 750-hour/750-question "World's Toughest Movie Quiz Ever" put together by author Jay Robert Nash. "A lot of the movies we didn't even have in the store," says Brogan, so those who would accuse him of

having an unfair advantage should think again—most video stores have a limited stock because of the high cost of maintaining inventory (though that's another story). That didn't stop him—"I'm a digger." The hardest part for Brogan was the section on quotes. He joins several other readers in citing Number 100 as the hardest question.

Remember that one? "I think that we're all in our private traps. Clamped in them. And none of us can ever get out. We scratch and claw, but only at the air. Only at each other. And for all of it, we never budge an inch." Where's it from? One reader didn't mince words: "I wouldn't put it past you to have made it up out of whole cloth." Another wrote, "I would have mailed this three weeks ago if it were not

for this 'private trap' quote—please send it or phone the answer in before I go insane." How ironic—the movie was *Psycho* and that was Norman talking.

We'd like to honor the other high scorers with a brief mention. Only one reader tallied up 99: Beverly Hershey. Ten scored 98: Christopher Michael Riess, Anne Schneider, Rebecca Schneider, Janice Cunningham, Michael Martin, Charles Markantes, Harry W. Langmead, Charles A. Gorske, Dennis P. Makaryk, and George E. Houck Jr. On the charts at a cool 97 are five readers and a couple: James R. Paul, John Ernst, Lonnie & Carla Titus, Mike Madden, Monica McCleary, and Thomas Bono.

Gene G. Kemmeter is as much a model trivia enthusiast as either of our winners.

He confided, "I keep notes on movies [as well as other videos] and have about 30 shoeboxes full of 3-by-5 filing cards with those notes. That gave me a head start since I had about half the movies already, so it cut down on the time." There's so much more from so many other contestants that we'd like to quote.

But we'd like to leave the last word to our staffer Gabrielle Macari, who (shudder) corrected all 406 of your entries: "Trivia buffs take themselves very seriously and whether they answered 10 questions or all 100, I could sense their conviction. I found myself rooting for them all the way home."

—The Editors

Research Associate: Gabrielle Macari

**1.** What does *The Grey Fox* get in his robbery of engine number 716?

*\$17 and a bottle of kidney pills.*

**2.** What marks the path Karen White must follow to find Eddie the Mangler in *The Howling*?

*Yellow happy face (smiley) stickers.*

**3.** What was the name and the specialty of the restaurant Paul and Mary Bland wanted to open in *Eating Raoul*?

*"Paul & Mary's Country Kitchen" or "Chez Bland", specializing in the Bland Enchilada.*

**4.** What does it say on the Holiday Inn marquee where the *Poltergeist* family ends up?

*"Welcome Dr. Fantasy & Friends."*

**5.** What advice did *Zelig* get from his father?

*"Save string."*

**6.** What foreign language does Gregory try to learn to impress Gregory's Girl?

*Italian.*

**7.** According to *Jane Fonda's Workout*, what exercises are we ready to do once we're warmed up?

*Arm exercises.*

**8.** What color and type of transportation do the unsuspecting kids drive into the territory of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*?

*A green van or a Ford van or a green Ford van.*

**9.** In what publication did Nick Nolte's Chad photo appear in *Under Fire*?

*Time Magazine, on the cover.*

**10.** Does David Bowie wear a belt or suspenders in his videotaped *Serious Moonlight* concert?

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

*Both suspenders and a belt.*

**11.** Where does *Duran Duran* wait for the "Nightboat" (Thorn EMI release)?

*At the Antigua Slipway.*

**12.** What does "baby" Mel Brooks want to grow up to be in *Free to Be... You and Me*?

*A cocktail waitress.*

**13.** What is the motto of the photo magazine the Three Stooges work for in the "Dutiful but Dumb" segment of Vol. VII?

*"If it's a good picture, it's out of WHACK."*

**14.** What 1940s film is on Mr. Mom's TV?

*'I Was a Male War Bride.'*

**15.** What does it say on Shelley Winters' sweatshirt when she tries to *Do It Debbie's Way*?

*"I'm only doing this for Debbie."*

**16.** What does it say on Carole King's needlework in *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*?

*"My life is a tapestry."*

**17.** What is the main entertainment act at the "Woodland Cafe" in *Walt Disney's Silly Symphonies*?

*A spider and a fly (doing a dance).*

**18.** What three shapes do "Elvis Drugs" come in according to *Elephant Parts*?

*Hound dogs, guitars and teddy bears.*

**19.** With what do they cut the "coke" in *Atlantic City*?

*Italian baby laxative.*

**20.** What is written on the cadets' sweatshirts in *An Officer and a Gentleman*?

*Foley's Fire Eaters.*

**21.** For what act was Joseph Wladislaw sentenced to be hung in *The Dirty Dozen*?

*Murder, or shot a soldier, or shot a soldier (deserter) running away with medical supplies.*

**22.** When David starts playing "global thermonuclear war" with the *War Games* computer, what two cities does he attack?

*Seattle, Washington and Las Vegas, Nevada.*

**23.** What does Thomas Dolby the projectionist read during *Live Wireless*?

*All Man Magazine.*

**24.** The *Valley Girl's* father associates his sandals and his earth shoes with what two events?

*His sandals were from Woodstock, his earth shoes from the march on Washington.*

**25.** What prize did Frances get for being on *This Is Your Life*?

*A 1958 Edsel (Pacer).*

**26.** What was Mike Finnell's role in *Airplane*?

*"Generally in charge of a lot of things."*

**27.** To whom is *Greystoke* dedicated?

*Ralph Richardson.*

**28.** What was the full name of the Institution Susan wanted to found in *Daniel*?

*The Isaacson's Foundation for Revolutionary Studies.*

**29.** What was the name of Nicki Brand's radio show on *Videodrome*?

*The Emotional Rescue Program.*

**30.** The sinking of what World War II ship cast Quint into

shark-infested waters as retold in *Jaws*?

*The U.S.S. Indianapolis.*

**31.** What was the name of the security program in *TRON*?

*TRON.*

**32.** What company found the *Iceman*?

*Polaris Mining & Chemical.*

**33.** Off what ship did Allen Bauer make a *Splash* when he was eight years old?

*The New England Queen.*

**34.** At what Italian restaurant do James Roberts and Diane Lawson meet for a date in *Hard to Hold*?

*Cafe Trieste.*

**35.** Who plays the interviewer outside *The Rutles'* company?

*George Harrison.*

**36.** On what American bus line does the Russian circus travel in *Moscow on the Hudson*?

*Liberty Lines.*

**37.** Of what club is Spanky elected treasurer in the "Anniversary Trouble" story in *The Best of the Little Rascals*?

*Ancient and Honery Order of Woodchucks Club, Inc.*

**38.** What is the name of the first U.S. Pope interviewed in the *Playboy Video, Vol. 1*?

*(Pope) John, Paul, Peter, George I.*

**39.** For what company does Charlie Chaplin work at the start of *Modern Times*?

*The Electro Steel Corp.*

**40.** An accident on what bridge made dancing "illegal" in *Footloose*?

*Crosby Bridge.*

continued on page 193



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# WHAT'S OPERA DOC?





# FROM OVERTURES TO ARIAS- A BEGINNER'S GUIDE



**P**erche opera? (Why opera?) A good question. My editor says he prefers "people with imperfect voices," a gentle way of saying that all that shrieking gets on his nerves. I quite agree—the kind of opera I mean is not the kind Tony Randall used to preen about on television. Real opera is more like *South Pacific* than the genteel spectacle Felix was so gaga for; it gives art and order to the biggest kinds of emotions and, well done, can give a kind of total artistic pleasure only plays and movies can approach.

Why? Opera is everything: art (the sets), music, dance, acting, and drama. To tell you the story of *La Boheme* is pointless—it's silly beyond belief. The text of one of the great tenor arias, "Che gelida manina," is basically an extended pickup line and not a terribly subtle one at that: "Oh, your little hand is cold, why don't you sit down and let me tell you about myself"—etc. But staged, it is a different thing entirely. To see the bohemian young poet, depressed from having had to use his play for kindling, at last meet a woman he could fall in love with, a woman who could be his muse; to see her fall for him, the kind of romantic artist she would love to fall in love with; to hear them spilling their guts to Puccini's music, their entire existence called up and there, visible in the words, the music, their faces—it's more than just 19th-century singles' action. It's a fantasia on life.

All representative art is such a fantasia to a some degree. And because everything about opera is big, its fantasies are larger, its stylization heavier. If our lives are rarely as complicated as Aida's, they're not usually like Sue Ellen's on *Dallas* either. Both are melodrama; Aida just sings better. So if you have a taste for classical music and like drama, you might like opera. You will never hear the abstract wailing opera is made out to be on sitcoms—if you can appreciate Pavarotti on a talk show, you will be thrilled by Domingo on stage

with all the other elements in place. And if you enjoyed *Amadeus* (see "Film Clips" review), you just might be ready for a taste of the real thing.

## Where to Begin?

We are lucky to live in a time when nearly any opera can find, somewhere in the world, a singer, director, and opera-house who can put on an effective performance of it. The following 10 operas were originally recorded in England, Germany, Italy, Austria, and New York and the level of both production and performance is consistently high. I have chosen at least one example of all the major genres: 18th-century drama and comedy, *belcanto*, 19th-century "high" drama, romantic drama and comedy, and two 20th-century "meta-operas" too good not to include. They form a sampler of representative works in French, German, and English as well as Italian and all are among the most popular works in their genres. You'll find them listed by dates of composition, earliest to latest:

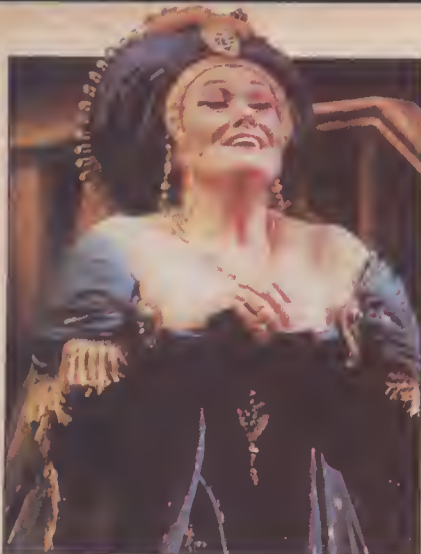
**Don Giovanni** (1787). Music: W.A. Mozart. Libretto in Italian: Lorenzo DaPonte. English subtitles. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, cond. Bernard Haitink. VAI.

Bernard Shaw, who is never wrong, considered *Don Giovanni* the most profound telling of the Don Juan story. It is one of the greatest of operas—tuneful, funny, yet with real moral seriousness at its core. It is remarkable for its very human characters whose indecision and ability to be swayed by passion are played upon by that embodiment of rebellion, the Don.

Benjamin Luxon's Don Giovanni is visually impressive and well-sung but needs a dash of hellfire to round out his performance. He suffers in comparison with Stafford Dean, who is brilliant as his procurer and servant, Leporello. Of his conquests, Rachel Yakar sings passionately as the jilted Donna Elvira and Elizabeth Gale's Zerlina is playful and starstruck; she is particu-

Photo courtesy Education Dept., MOG/Frank Dunand

BY M. GEORGE STEVENSON



larly good in the famous duet "La ci darem la mano."

The VHS Hi-Fi tracks expose a lot of tape hiss in the original monaural source. The linear track, however, is quite reasonable—the problems seem to stem from the televised performance not having been meant for anything better than TV-set speakers. This is true of virtually all of the VAI Glyndebourne tapes, a problem compounded by little camera slippages and other minor mishaps—too bad, since the Glyndebourne productions are all so good.

**The Magic Flute** (1791). Music: W.A.

Mozart. Libretto in German: Emanuel Schikaneder. English subtitles. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, cond. Bernard Haitink. VAI.

I love *The Magic Flute* because it can be about as much or as little as I want it to be—like the witty and beautiful David Hockney sets that adorn this production, it is allegorical enough to let me read a grand message into it and charming enough to not make me do it to have a good time. Its story concerns a quest for wisdom (and the right to get the girl) filled with comedy, drama, magic, and Mozart at his peak, here presented as clearly as I have ever seen it. In Benjamin Luxon it has a top-of-the-line Papageno—the funniest character in opera. The rest of the cast is also good,

especially Felicity Lott's Pamina. There are two problems, however: Thomas Thomaschke has too light a voice to go as low as Sarastro must, and Leo Goeke's Tamino is all dough-faced passivity—hardly the hero he needs to be, however pleasant his voice.

**Lucia Di Lammermoor** (1835). Music: Gaetano Donizetti. Libretto in Italian: Salvatore Cammarano. English subtitles. (a) Italian movie version: VAI. (b) The Metropolitan Opera, cond. Richard Bonyng. Pioneer disc.

*Lucia* simply is *belcanto*—the most lyric of lyric opera, requiring a cast who can not only sing beautifully (*belcanto* translates as "beautiful singing"), but grasp enough of

*continued on page 197*

*Better than 'Dallas': (top) Joan Sutherland in Cilea's 'Adriana Lecouvreur,' (right) Ileana Cortubas and Neil Shicoff as Mimi and Rodolfo in Puccini's 'La Boheme.'*



## Selected Videography

### Adriana Lecouvreur

Music: Francesco Cilea; Libretto (in Italian): Arturo Colautti. English subtitles. Color. 1984. Joan Sutherland, Heather Begg, Anson Austin. Australian Opera, Sydney Elizabethan Orchestra, Richard Bonyng, cond. Staging John Copley. TV dir. Hugh Davidson. 135 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. Sony.

### Aida

Music: Giuseppe Verdi; Libretto (in Italian): Antonio Ghislanzoni. Libretto enclosed. Color. 1981. Maria Ciara, Nicola Martinucci, Fiorenza Cossotto, Giuseppe Scandola. Orchestra and Chorus of the Arena di Verona, Anton Guadango, cond. Staging Giancarlo Sbragia. TV dir. Brian Large. 154 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO./LV. \$59.95. Pioneer.

### Un Ballo in Maschera

Music: Giuseppe Verdi; Libretto (in Italian): Antonio Somma. English subtitles. Color. 1980. Luciano Pavarotti, Katia Ricciarelli, Judith Blegen, Louis Quilico. Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Giuseppe Patane, cond. Staging Elijah Moshinsky. TV dir. Brian Large. 149 min. LV. \$49.95. Pioneer.

### La Boheme

Music: Giacomo Puccini; Libretto (in Italian): Giuseppe Giacosa/Luigi Illica. Libretto enclosed. Color. 1982. Ileana Cortubas, Neil Shicoff, Marilyn Zschau, Thomas Allen. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Lamberto Gardelli, cond. Staging John Copley. TV dir. Brian Large. 115 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO./LV. \$49.95. Pioneer.

### Boris Godunov

Music: Modest Mussorgsky; Libretto (in Russian) by the composer. English subtitles. Color. 1954. Alexander Pirogov. Bolshoi Theatre. 105 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Corinth.

### Carmen

Music: Georges Bizet; Libretto (in French): Henri Meilhac/Ludovic Halevy. English subtitles. Color. 1984. Julia Migenes-Johnson, Placido Domingo, Ruggero Raimondi. Orchestre National de France, Lorin Maazel, cond. Film dir. by Francesco Rosi. 151 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

### Les Contes d'Hoffmann (Tales of Hoffman)

Music: Jacques Offenbach; Libretto (in French): Jules Barbier/Michel Carre. Libretto enclosed. Color. 1981. Placido Domingo, Ileana Cortubas, Luciana Serra. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden, George Pretre, cond. Staging John Schlesinger. TV dir. Brian Large. 149 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO./LV. \$59.95. Pioneer.

### Dialogues of the Carmelites

Music: Francis Poulenc; Libretto (in French): Georges Bernanos. Sung in English. Color. 1984. Joan Sutherland, Heather Begg, Isobel Buchanan. The Australian Opera, Elizabethan Sydney Orchestra, Richard Bonyng, cond. Staging Elijah Moshinsky. TV dir. Henry Prokop. 155 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. Sony.

### Don Carlo

Music: Giuseppe Verdi; Libretto (in Italian): F.J. Mery/Camille du Locle. English sub-

titles. Color. 1984. Placido Domingo, Mirella Freni, Grace Bumbry, Louis Quilico, Nicolai Ghiaurov. Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus, James Levine, cond. Staging John Dexter. 214 min. LV. \$49.95. Pioneer.

### Don Giovanni

Music: W.A. Mozart; Libretto (in Italian): Lorenzo DePonte. English subtitles. Color. 1977. Benjamin Luxon, Stafford Dean, Rachel Yakar, Elizabeth Gale, Pierre Thau. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, London Philharmonic, Bernard Haitink, cond. Staging Peter Hall. TV dir. Dave Heather. 173 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. VAI.

### Ernani

Music: Giuseppe Verdi; Libretto (in Italian): Francesco Piave. Libretto enclosed. Color. 1982. Placido Domingo, Mirella Freni, Renato Bruson. Teatro La Scala Orchestra, Riccardo Muti, cond. 135 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

### Eugene Onegin

Music: Peter Tchaikovsky; Libretto (in Russian): P. Tchaikovsky/Konstantin Shilovsky. English subtitles. Color. 1952. Galina Vishnevskaya. Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra and Chorus. Film dir. Roman Tikhomirov. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Corinth.

### La Fanciulla del West

Music: Giacomo Puccini; Libretto (in Italian): Gelfo Civinni/Carlo Zangarini. Libretto enclosed. Color. 1982. Placido Domingo, Carol Neblett, Silvano Carroli. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden. 139 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95./LV. \$49.95. Pioneer.

*continued on page 201*



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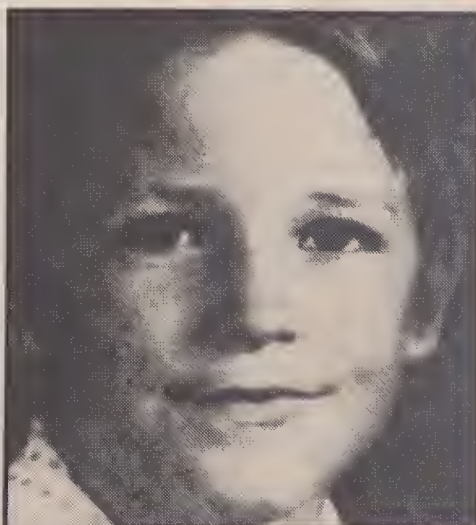
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# EYES • ON PROJECTION TVs

**I**n June we ran our first "Eyes On" feature. The subject was 25-inch monitors. The shootout proved to be an effective way of blending objective criteria with the sort of personal preferences most people rely on when deciding what to buy. This time, we decided to take on projection TVs, an elephantine species that faces formidable problems in its effort to marry big screen impact with conventional TV quality.

Projection video systems today have screen sizes of three feet and over, and we associate the term with big screens of up to ten feet diagonally. They use lenses and mirrors to magnify the image created by a small picture tube onto a larger external screen. The very large picture creates a gut-level emotional response far in excess of what the same picture evokes on a 19- or 25-inch screen.

The idea is not new. At least one RCA TV using a mirror and a skyward-pointing tube dates back to the earliest days of television broadcasting. The modern generation began in 1973 when Henry Kloss and his colleagues at Advent introduced their VideoBeam system that projected three separate (red, green and blue) images onto a curved screen. The first model, affordable by a few well-heeled consumers, was aimed mainly at the industrial and commercial market. By 1977 they offered models with screen sizes of five, six and seven feet.

Pictures that big had such an impact that, given a choice, most viewers elected to watch the larger picture. Bars were among the first places to use large screens to attract customers during sporting events. Prices were steep. The seven-foot model was \$3995, and the six-foot and five-foot models were \$2995 and \$2595. But those were 1977 dollars, and you could buy a new car for that kind of money. Even today the cheapest projectors are still \$1995 and up. But inflation has made those prices a smaller fraction of the household budget and many can now afford such a purchase.

In 1977 there was also a substitute for the true three-tube projector. You could convert a standard TV into a projector with a lens assembly and screen. There are still a few of those kits around, but most are awkward and produce dim pictures. We did not consider any of them in this comparison. The one-piece system using a translucent rear-projection screen, mirrors and high-magnification lenses has now taken over a large part of the market.

Despite a giant picture's visual impact, its size obviously eats up more of your living space. What is less obvious is that it has lower contrast and brightness than direct view systems. Little can be done about its lack of contrast. Ambient light and stray light from the projector illuminate the screen, so the portions that should remain



Photos by Les Morsillo



*For this Eyes On test, we included three rear projection models (left to right): the 45-inch Mitsubishi VS-457RS, the 40-inch RCA DVM400 (for the Dimensia system), and the 41-inch Sony KPR 4110. The screens were tested using identical video inputs (see inset photos) and no audio inputs.*



dark don't. One way to maintain the contrast ratio between light and dark would be to make the bright parts brighter. Few front projection systems achieve a screen brightness of over 200 footlamberts. (Footlamberts indicate how much light reaches you from the screen.) However, rear projections systems raise screen brightness to about 360 footlamberts.

Another area in which projection systems seem to lag is picture detail. In fact, they deliver as much detail as any direct view set. But the same quantity of detail is used to cover a much larger area. The eye reads the lack of closely packed detail as a softness of focus. A good analogy would be listening to music played too slowly. It sounds like separate notes rather than a tune.

For our comparison we chose four popular two-piece front-projection systems and three rear-projection systems, each of which had some feature or group of features that makes it stand out. In the front projection category we compared the 78-inch Novabeam One, the 64-inch Kloss Novabeam Two, the 50-inch Mitsubishi VS-526RS, and the 100-inch Zenith PV800P. In the rear projection category we compared the 45-inch Mitsubishi 457, the 40-inch RCA DVM4000 (one for a Dimensia system), and the 41-inch Sony KPR4110. As the accompanying chart shows, many of the monitors tested have tuners. In order to compare just the merits of the projection system we ignored the tuners and compared them using identical signals introduced into their video inputs.

# The Editors Test View The New Large Screens

We did not compare their sound. Even though some have respectable sound systems, they sound best with the audio fed through a high quality stereo system. RCA also makes a 45-inch non-Dimensia rear projection model and Mitsubishi makes a 40-inch model. Competing models and sizes are available from many manufacturers. Among those we missed are various sizes from Magnavox, NEC, Panasonic, and Sanyo.

Our comparison was conducted at the showrooms of New York Video through the courtesy of its owner, Giovanni Cozzi. New York Video specializes in custom installations, mostly projection systems, and its work has appeared in VIDEO as Video Environments.

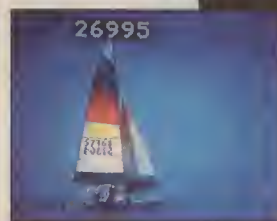
To challenge the projectors equally we used a mixture of test signals from a B&K 1260 NTSC Generator and program material from video discs played on a Pioneer LD-700 player, but all of our opinions were formed on the basis of what we could distinguish by eye rather than what we could measure with instruments. We now present four separate opinions about the seven projection systems we viewed. Though there was some discussion as we viewed the sets, each opinion was written separately. What we saw is what you get.

—Lancelot Braithwaite, Technical Editor



My own negative feelings toward projection TV focus on two factors: one real, the other imagined. First, a word about the real, the brightness. Or lack of it. Large screen TVs have always been plagued by the fact that they never appear as bright as TVs. As we reported in the September, 1984 VIDEO, it's difficult to compare TV monitors with projectors, let alone compare the two types of projectors (front and rear) with each other. With both types, you're fighting a losing battle for footlamberts, which measure the amount of reflection from a light source. In front-projectors, the measurement is in lumens or footcandles. Unfortunately, if you feel bigger is better (why else get a projection TV?) you'll be disappointed. As all screen sizes get larger, their footlambert and lumen numbers shrink, and their pictures seem duller.

The imagined part of my skepticism comes from the fact that I keep hoping that projection TVs will effectively bring a movie theater into the living room. Well, they



don't and they can't and I constantly spend time pointing out flaws. Other than watching a World Series game with a group of people when I dream of large screen, a 25-inch monitor is fine for me.

On the other hand, I do have some nice things to say about projection TV. This batch of seven screens was collectively better than any group I'd seen in a show room. Clearly, I preferred a rear model over the front types because the single-piece system is less cumbersome, and the rear TVs had overall better picture quality, with less variation from different viewing angles (thanks to flat rather than curved screens). The worst rear TV was about the same quality as the best front TV. Of course, there's price to consider.

The models we viewed ran from \$2800 to \$3600 (40 to 100-inch screen sizes), a hefty premium.

The one I would want to take home was the Mitsubishi 457 (45 inch, \$3200) but the Sony KPR-4110 (41-inch, \$2800) was a close second. I like the Sony's skin tones better but its slightly muddy yellow wasn't as easy on food and beach scenes. The 457 was the brightest of the three rears (actually, of all seven, it had the cleanest whites). The RCA was disappointing. There was more color fringing, the flesh

tones were flat, and it seemed the least bright. But I liked its deep green hue. If you want to watch the U.S. Open golf tournament, this is the one.

If I had to settle for a front model, I'd also prefer the Mitsubishi 526. It had all-around performance; rich reds, yellows that looked yellow, good contrast, and a fairly wide viewing angle. The Kloss Novabeams (both the One and Two) were disappointing. Though the brightness was relatively acceptable, the skin tones seemed washed out, the resolution was wanting (a little

## PROJECTION TVs

Make and Model	Price <sup>1</sup>	Dimensions <sup>2</sup>	Screen Size <sup>3</sup>	Projector Screen Supplied	Projector to Screen Distance	Brightness <sup>4</sup>
<b>Rear Projectors</b>						
Mitsubishi VS-457RS	\$3200	50½ × 42 × 29¾	45	Single Unit	—	160
RCA DVM4000	\$2990	40⅞ × 36⅜ × 26⅜	40	Single Unit	—	N.A.
Sony KPR-4110	\$2499-2799	51 × 38¾ × 22⅞	41	Single Unit	—	220
<b>Front Projectors</b>						
Kloss Model One	\$3350	18¾ × 27¾ × 22¼	78	Optional	114"	82
Kloss Model Two	\$2200	31 × 24⅜ × 12	64	Optional	48"	200 lumens
Mitsubishi 526RS	\$3600	62½ × 49⅝ × 31¾	50	Single Unit	—	200
Zenith PV800P	\$1995	12½ × 24 × 30½	100	Optional	156"	N.A.

<sup>1</sup>Suggested list

<sup>2</sup>Height, width and depth in inches

<sup>3</sup>Diagonally in inches

<sup>4</sup>Footlamberts



Front projection TVs. Left to Right: Kloss Model 1, Kloss Model 2, Mitsubishi 526RS, Zenith PV800P.



fuzzy), and the reds and yellows on peaches were thin. The deep shadow details, however, were pretty good. The Zenith was the least acceptable. The tint, color veracity, brightness, and contrast were mediocre to poor, and the color fringing was the worst of any of the four.

When we do evaluations of this kind we always seem to second-guess ourselves when it comes to price versus quality. On VCRs, TVs, monitors, that second-guessing seems much more critical than it is here, simply because these are all

high-ticket items to begin with. It's nice to admit that a \$2800 Sony is almost as good as a \$3200 Mitsubishi, but then the difference seems to be that the Mitsubishi is four inches larger rather than \$400 better.

—Doug Garr



Let me confess up front that I approached this test prejudiced against projection TVs. Like most prejudices, this

was fueled by ignorance. I had not kept up with the format. While I knew projection systems had improved, I still associated the big screens with fuzzy focus and pale colors. When a colleague compared their image quality to what you see when you peer into a magnifying bathroom mirror, I glibly agreed.

Happily, I was wrong. The seven sets we viewed showed good resolution and sturdy colors. The three rear projection models displayed an edge over the four front projection TVs overall, but this

*continued on page 204*

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Front	Yes	Yes	1	Yes	N.A.	4
Front	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	5 + 5	4
Projector or Remote	Optional	No	1-2	No	N.A.	1
Yes	Optional	No	2 Projector 2 Remote	No	N.A.	1
Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	10 + 10	4
Yes	Optional	No	1	No	1.5	1

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The Video Club Membership, once the biggest money maker for video stores, is slowly fading into oblivion. After many years, consumers are bored with the some old video clubs. They're crying out for something totally new!



Now comes a revolutionary new kind of club you can sell to the thousands of people in your area who have been waiting for the next evolution in video. It offers them membership in the NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR VIDEO PRODUCERS with "First Nighter" passes and reserved seats to exciting premieres of important new video productions at a Viditytheatre right in your own store. Think of the prestige that club members will enjoy participating in our Video Academy Award voting and the fun they'll have socializing at private screenings with other elite members of this Academy. Getting the idea? This is just the beginning of how Viditytheatre can work for you in building your members and customers.

## Here's what you get with Viditytheatre

### The Theatre

We supply your video store with a modular, color-coordinated Viditytheatre that can fit inside any store of 1,200 or more square feet without disturbing the store operations. How do we do it?

By applying the magic of theatrical curtains that appear by night and vanish by day. These magnificent, heavyweight logo-decorated floor-to-ceiling Viditytheatre curtains partition off a 300 to 400 (or more) square foot area. It transforms your store into a theatre at night with rows of plush movie theatre seats, giant screen front projection TV, formica theatre entrance, Viditytheatre 4-color poster, chase light signs, popcorn maker and concession stand, all designed to create a magnificent theatre environment and a giant attraction in your community. And all for a cost to qualified dealers of only a few hundred dollars a month.

If you do not have enough space, consider expanding your current location or renting an additional space near your store.

### The Viditytheatre Programs

The NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR VIDEO PRODUCERS screens video production from all over the world in every category... drama, comedy, documentary, music, sports, etc., and selects the very best each month for nightly exhibition in our nationwide circuit of Viditytheatres. Following successful exhibition at your Viditytheatre, each program is then made available to your store on





# A VIDEO STORE BY DAY ONE LOCATION

## VIDITHEATRE™

cassette for rental or sale. By then the word of mouth in your community, as well as throughout the country, will have helped pre-sell the program.

### The Advertising and Promotion

Available to you are the NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR VIDEO PRODUCERS membership cards, playbills and programs describing each production or mailings to your club members, Veditheatre reserved seat tickets, local ads designed to bring you new customers and members, P.O.P. materials and National Academy

window decals, plus a whole program to make your club member votes a part of a Video Academy Award TV show. In addition, there will be national publicity, advertising and promotions to create consumer excitement and maximize your Veditheatre club sales.

### The Benefits

- 1) You collect initial membership fees from the NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR VIDEO PRODUCERS Club Plan.
- 2) You rent and sell new video programs pre-sold in your area by your Veditheatre.
- 3) You steal the thunder from video racks, mass merchandisers

and other video stores who don't have Veditheatre.

- 4) You have your club members returning again and again to your store.
- 5) You can use Veditheatre for other purposes such as: private group rentals, possible arrangements with other companies for telecommunications, closed circuit sports events, as well as business and club meetings, etc.

### Who's Behind Veditheatre?



### Direct Broadcast Programs, Inc. . . .

is a nationwide producer and distributor of video programs, the producer of the first interactive video cassettes as well as a producer of the FIRST national TV show to cover the world of video. Its executives have been an important force in the movie and theater industry and know how to make theater exhibition work for you.

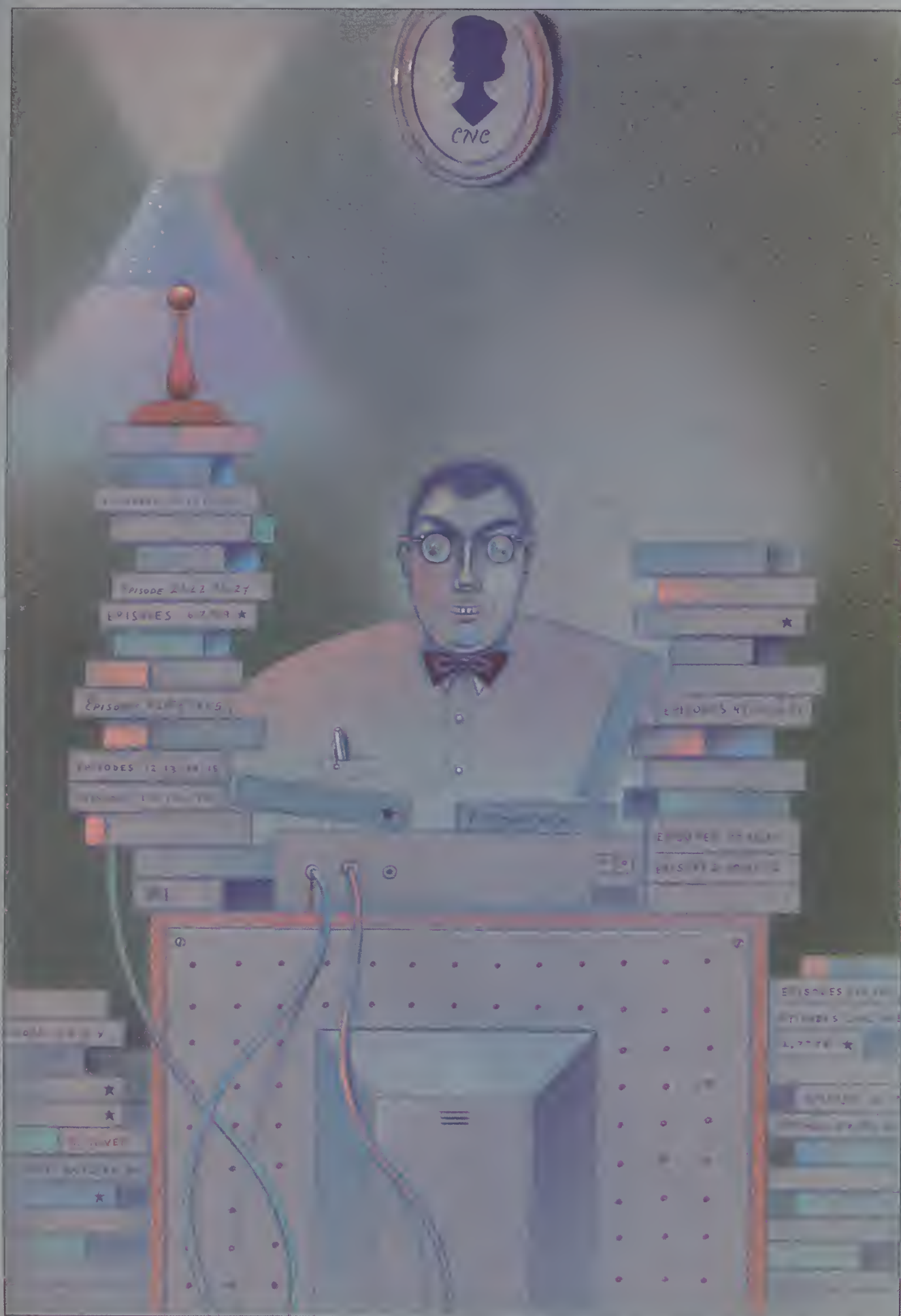
### The National Academy for Video Producers . . .

is an organization of many of the top video producers in America.

### How can you beat out your competition?

By acting NOW and becoming the only Veditheatre in your neighborhood. To reserve your protected territory for Veditheatre, and for all the details, write to us on your letterhead: The National Academy for Video Producers, 22761 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, California 90265.







# VIDEOHOLICS

## ANONYMOUS

### THERE IS NO CURE

One blank tape is never enough. I always have to fill another. Scouring classified ads in video swap sheets and exchanging TV listings with other addicts throughout the country has become more than a hobby. It's a way of life, and not just for me.

There is a subculture of video freaks in this country whose sole purpose is to collect tapes. Most are not the hardware videophiles who want to collect every new gadget and have the latest state-of-the-art machine. These vidheads are less interested in how their machines record than in exchanging two episodes of *My Mother the Car* and one *Crusader Rabbit* cartoon for a copy of *The Miss Nude Teenager Contest*.

Swapping nuts' tastes are as bizarre as their obsession with taping. Trade lists crawl with oddities. One hockey fan, determined to eliminate such extraneous material as skating and scoring, offers 40 hours worth of "throw off the gloves and fight" scenes. He wants more. Perhaps a human autopsy is more up your line. Whatever your kink, there's someone out there with it on tape.

A gentleman in Pennsylvania wants gore. He'll trade six hours of the most graphic violence the screen has ever seen. It took this blood buff six years to lovingly assemble the gruesome spectacle on three tapes. Included in the collection is David Warner's decapitation in *The Omen* set to the soundtrack from *The Sound of Music*.

confess. I'm a videoholic.

It started innocently. I saw an Alfred Hitchcock episode that I wanted to tape listed in *TV Guide* but it was on a channel I couldn't get. I called an acquaintance in Sacramento for help. He said maybe we could cut a deal. Knowing his affection for Westerns, I sent him a copy of a *Rawhide* rerun. In return he taped the Master's serial for me—and I was hooked on collecting.

I tell myself I'm just a social taper. Recording *Dobie Gillis* and *Fernwood Tonight* gives me a nice nostalgic glow. It's like I'm helping to keep a little bit of America alive. But I know I'm a tape 'n' trade junkie.

### BY PAUL FREEMAN

To experience these dubious pleasures, you need only supply the source with something on his want list; for example, the movie *Make Them Die Slowly*.

Other want lists request such video novelties as "scenes of people juggling," "any movie that has women wearing very high heels," and TV's "celebrity obituaries," which sounds like the premise for a new Dick Clark special. Truly uncensored bloopers—the kind that would make Dick blush and Ed McMahon run for cover under the nearest Clydesdale—are in great demand.

Like many hardcore collectors, I got my start in 16mm films. My wife Pam made me a birthday present of a copy of *Ozzie and Harriet* she picked up at a flea market. I had to rent a projector, but what a rush it was to watch the irrepressible Ricky in my own living-room. It was like the return of a long-lost security blanket.

Mick Martin, the Sacramento buff who got me hooked, also started out with movies. As a youngster, he hoarded movie posters and stills. When VCRs came on the

market, we both independently concluded that this machine wasn't a luxury. It was a necessity.

Martin, a local film critic, is leery of legal ambiguities and so does little trading. "I collect only to satisfy my own eclectic tastes." His 650 movies and TV shows have a strong western flavor. John Wayne, Randolph Scott and Buck Jones figure prominently, as do series like *Maverick*, *Gunsmoke*, and *Wanted: Dead or Alive*.

"I'm a TV kid," Martin says. "Some of the best times I ever had were in front of the screen. For me seeing a Western is like going back to a place where you used to play as a kid, lying on the grass and remembering. It's a nice feeling."

## Video Rarities

For Jim Davis, video became a welcome extension of the record collection he has been hoarding since the '50s. Davis' material runs the gamut from rockabilly to Billy Idol, but he's discriminating. "Some video people collect just to collect. Like stamp or coin collectors, they just want to know they have it. I pick up a few things because of their trade value. But basically, I get what I like. It's great to be able to pull out the Shirelles, Gene Vincent, the Dave Clark Five—whatever I haven't seen in a while, whatever I'm in the mood for."

Some of his material is so rare that researchers, broadcasters, and musicians come to him to view his extensive library. Among the gems are very rare Elvis Presley clips. "I've got, on tape, home movies that fans have taken of Elvis—onstage, backstage, talking to visitors at Graceland, color stuff of him by the pool in '58. I've also got eight hours of outtakes from his '68 TV special. These are real treasures."

It won't be easy to wheel and deal for

"I've got, on tape, home movies that fans have taken of Elvis."



these goodies. Says Davis, "It's gotten to the point where the stuff I'm looking for is ultra-rare." He wants more episodes of such '60s rock TV series as *Shindig*, *Hulabaloo*, and *Shivaree*, which paraded the top stars of the day onstage to lip-sync for shrieking teenage groupies.

Like most swappers, Davis has been ripped off a few times, receiving tapes of lamentable quality or not tapes at all. "There's nothing you can do about that," he sighs. "If you're going to trade, you've got to be trusting."

Carelessness can be as devastating as dishonesty. A friend (or is that former friend?) borrowed my mint copy of *Here Come the Nelsons*, the feature-film precursor to *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, and lent me a third-generation copy of the 1979 Oscar telecast. His three-year-old daughter yanked my tape out of its cassette and fed it to her Cabbage Patch Kids

as a spaghetti dinner. I was tempted to turn her Cabbage dolls into coleslaw. In deference to the spirit of the Nelsons, I refrained.

Is Davis worried that the quality of his tapes might erode as time goes by? "They said that about Super-8 and I have films 20 years old that are just fine. So I don't worry about that. Although, supposedly, if an atomic bomb blows up, it will erase all the magnetic tapes close by." At last I understand what all the "no nukes" fuss is about. If the thought of a video winter makes me a restless sleeper, it must give Art Volo of Ann Arbor, Michigan insomnia. After all, he has over 1000 tapes in his collection. The library was impressive enough to attract invitations from local talk shows and an unsettling visit from the FBI (who found nothing illicit).

Volo owns six Beta recorders, two VHS and one three-quarter inch. He plans to add two more machines soon. "Now everybody and his uncle's got a VCR," groans Volo. "My biggest problem is that when a neighbor gets a machine, he wants to borrow from me. I won't lend tapes anymore. I've lost 30 that way."

## Twilight Tapes

Unreliable neighbors aren't the only cause of losses. I arranged a deal involving tapes of incredibly rare TV shows including a prestardom dramatic stint by James Dean on *Schlitz Playhouse*. They had been transferred from films that were no longer available. The fellow with whom I was trading had a prior commitment to ship the 10 tapes to Southern California so his friend there could dub copies for himself. They never arrived. Presumably, they're doomed to drift forever in the postal serv-

*continued on page 207*

## Videoholic Support Network

Establishing trade contacts is easier than you might think. Start by placing or answering a classified ad in one of the specialty publications listed below. They've been recommended by numerous videophiles. State your wants and what you have to offer. One contact leads to another, and you could soon find yourself up to your coaxial cables in trade deals.

**Video Shopper:** Box 1509, Titusville, Fla. 32781; monthly; one-year subscription—\$15 (U.S.). Editorial content, which covers hardware and software news, commands only 5-15 percent of the space. The rest of each issue is devoted to ads, including over 60 categories of classifieds, which are run free of charge. If you don't know where to begin, try here.

**VideoMania:** 115 Stanton, Ripon, Wis. 54971; monthly; \$9.95 for 12 issues; sample for \$1. A slim, chummy paper offering news and reviews, as

well as loads of alluring classifieds from traders. Classifieds are free to non-business subscribers.

**The TV Collectors:** Box 188, Needham, Mass. 02192; 6 issues per year—\$15; sample for \$3. Free classified ads—buy, sell or trade. Nostalgic pieces on stars and shows of the past, plus news on current television. Can be helpful in deciding what shows to collect, which episodes are most important and where you acquire them.

**Movie Collector's World:** Box 309, Fraser, Mich. 48026; 26 issues (one year)—\$18. Bills itself as "the marketplace for film and video collectors." Runs approximately 50 pages. Articles examine films and, less frequently, television of yesterday and today. Coverage of video and disc releases. The video section of the classifieds is rather skimpy (ads cost 5 cents per word), but you'll find many unusual tapes in the display ads that aren't avail-

able at your neighborhood video shop.

**Big Reel:** Route #3, Box 239 A, Madison, N.C. 27025; 12 issues—\$15; sample copy for \$3. Lots of paper collectibles and 16mm films offered. Video-related content has grown. Classifieds in the Video Mart section cost 7 cents per word. Overall accent of this thick paper is on B Westerns. If that's your main area of interest, give the Big Reel a spin.

**Goldmine:** 700 E. State St., Iola, Wis. 54990; biweekly; 13 issues (half-year)—\$22; full year—\$35. This publication, found at some newsstands, is aimed at record collectors, but it now includes a video section. News, reviews, and a sprinkling of informative articles. Advertising in the classified "Marketplace" costs 7 cents per word. If you want tapes of rock acts, '50s-'80s, check this out. It could prove to be a goldmine indeed in terms of trade contacts.

—P.F.



# THE (BARGAIN) BASEMENT TAPES

## Eleventh-Hour Stocking Stuffers Any Video Fan Can Afford

**B**everly Hills Cop, Pinocchio, Mr. Mom, and The Thin Man have something in common this holiday season. They all figure in the latest confrontation between the people who make prerecorded videos and the people who bring them to you. With a longing sidewise glance at the record industry, video labels are risking bushels of dollars in an attempt to encourage more consumers to buy videos—to take them home and *keep* them rather than merely rent them as more than 84 percent of us now do. The labels are dramatically cutting prices on selected titles to encourage more consumers to buy, and to buy videocassettes as gifts. From Vestron's "VideoGift" to the stocking Paramount is handing out with each of its cassettes, the theme is buy, buy, buy. Home video manufacturers don't get a direct share of rental income; they make money only when a cassette is sold. So manufacturers are doing everything possible to change your habits—to make you think of what you're going to buy every time you walk into a video store, not what you're going to rent.

That also means encouraging video stores to *sell*, which is easier said than done. Rental-obsessed retailers often don't have copies of popular titles to sell, preferring instead to keep most of their inventory in rental stock. "Manufacturers are trying to force a change in the video business," says Gary Messenger, head of North American Video, a North Carolina store chain. That attempt will determine where you buy prerecorded tapes—if video stores

*continued on page 180*



Christmas bargains include (top to bottom) 'Pinocchio,' 'Beverly Hills Cop,' 'Dinner at Eight,' and 'The Women.'

BY TONY SEIDEMAN

# BERGER-BRAITHWAITE VIDEO TESTS

**December 1985**

**Sylvania RKE198SL02 "Superset II" MTS Monitor/Receiver**

**Pioneer VX-50 SuperBeta Hi-Fi VCR with MTS**

**Zenith VR3200 VHS Hi-Fi VCR with MTS**

**Akai VS-303U VHS VCR**

## *Sylvania "Superset II" MTS Monitor/Receiver*



Sylvania's newest crop of TVs is as sophisticated as any available. One of the more attractive models is the RKE198SL02, in the Superset II series,

which offers MTS (multichannel television sound) and a host of features that would please both hard- and softcore video buffs. It is one of a series of sets in assorted sizes and stylings. This one is a perfect size for your editing room or any place where space is at a premium.

MTS gets top billing because of the intense excitement this new extension to broadcast television has generated. The set offers a choice of forced mono (for reducing noise when receiving distant stereo stations), stereo, and SAP (second audio program). But it does not offer the option of mono main audio on one channel and SAP on the other. It also offers expanded stereo for better depth and simulated stereo to improve mono broadcasts. Its sleep timer and display recall are conventional. However, it has a feature called "Personal Preference" that brings up your chosen favorite channel with the volume, bass, treble, balance, stereo/mono, and antenna/accessory input settings you like, all at the touch of one button. That's a new one to us.

Two separate switching systems let you connect a variety of video sources. First is a set of the more common audio/video jacks. It provides for attaching two such devices, each with stereo audio. The second set of jacks provides a loop-through feature so you can record from something different than what you're viewing. In addition, a monitor output supplies the program material that is being viewed. Both the loop-through and monitor jacks deliver fixed-level stereo audio. Another stereo audio output has its level determined by



the volume setting and is perfect for feeding an external stereo audio system.

The second set of source switches lets you choose from three RF inputs. One is intended for an antenna or cable feed. The other two may be used for a cable converter and a game so, for example, you won't have to make changes to view those sources. An unusual feature is that the set remembers the channels set for auxiliary sources. When you select one, the set automatically switches to the channel last used with that input. Another unusual touch is the space provided in the subsidiary control compartment to store the re-

mote.

**Description.** The RKE198SL02 is quite compact because its cabinet extends barely 1-1/2 inches beyond the picture tube on the top and sides. On the bottom the tube border is just 4-3/4 inches from the support surface with 2 by 3-inch speakers, a control panel, and pedestal squeezed into the space. It is 18-1/2 inches high by 19 wide by 18-3/4 deep including the projection for the picture tube. We wish Sylvania had gone ahead and shaped it into a cube, or made the top a flat surface suitable for a VCR. It is styled in silver grey with a black pedestal, control panel, and frame that sur-



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EVERY PURCHASE OF  
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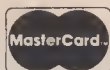
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# VAL-U-LINE

## VIDEO DEPOT/SOUND PLAYGROUND

### An Important Message from the President

**To all readers of Video Magazine**  
(especially our previous customers)

Thank you for making VAL-U-LINE one of the largest, most respected and quality-oriented video direct marketers in the United States.

We, at VAL-U-LINE, have adopted a very simple philosophy "to offer the products of your choice, at the best possible price."

We are continually concerned about your new video investment. Therefore, our staff of well-trained video experts will advise you of all current, comparable products that may have the same features and specifications, yet, at a cost savings to you.

As you know, many different manufacturers supply nearly identical electronic equipment in terms of features and specifications. Since we stock *all* major brands and purchase in truckload quantities, we can offer you, at any given time, the greatest values toward your new electronics purchase because of our unique new purchasing system.

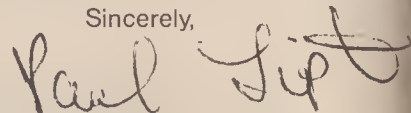
In a continuing effort to supply you, our customer, with all your electronics needs, we additionally carry a full line of monitors, TVs, Projection TVs, telephones and telephone answering equipment, microwave ovens, personal stereos,

radar detectors, and a vast array of other electronics oriented products. Plus, since audio and video products have now become integrated, we will also offer quality audio products, as well.

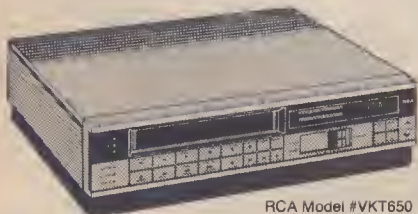
Call the VAL-U-LINE for all your electronics needs. We have satisfied tens of thousands of customers in the past, with the fastest delivery of factory fresh, double-boxed merchandise to assure your products arrive safely and undamaged. We also want you to know that all our products carry original manufacturers U.S. warranties. Further, for your convenience and benefit, we have set-up a network of service and shipping centers coast-to-coast to make certain that your new merchandise arrives as quickly as possible from your order date.

Again, thank you for your support, and we look forward to continuing to offer you the best possible price and advice on your next electronics purchase.

Sincerely,



Paul Lipton  
President/CEO VAL-U-LINE Inc.



RCA Model #VKT650

#### RCA SelectaVision Stereo with VHS Hi-Fi and Remote Control

Brings a new standard of audio performance to your home video system.

- VHS Hi-Fi delivers amazingly lifelike stereo reproduction. (External amplifier system or compatible TV/monitor required for stereo.)
- Infrared remote control lets you activate all special effects, timer programming steps and most other VCR functions.
- Sophisticated record/playback system with three video heads helps deliver jitter-free Stop Action, Frame Advance, Slow Motion, Double Speed and Reverse Play in SP and SLP modes; Picture Search in SLP mode.
- Electronic timer programming of up to eight TV shows one year in advance—by remote control.
- On-screen displays aid the user during remote programming steps and normal VCR operation.
- 80-position voltage synthesis tuner can be programmed to receive all VHF/UHF channels or up to 63 cable channels. (Local systems may vary.)
- On-screen tape remaining indicator.
- Electronic program indexing simplifies finding recorded programs.



RCA Model #VKP950

#### RCA SelectaVision 950 Convertible Stereo VCR with VHS Hi-Fi and Dolby™

Introducing the ultimate VCR—SelectaVision® 950 from RCA. Includes today's most innovative video features, including VHS Hi-Fi audio, 5-head video quality, programming by remote control and instant portability.

- VHS Hi-Fi delivers amazing lifelike stereo reproduction approaching the quality of advanced digital audio systems. (External amplifier system or compatible TV/monitor required for stereo.)
- Converts instantly from table model VCR to portable video system (optional rechargeable battery and video camera). Cordless recorder/tuner hook-up eliminates cable clutter.
- Remote programming up to eight events, one year in advance.
- Sophisticated five-head video system helps deliver jitter-free Stop Action, Frame Advance, Slow Motion, Double Speed, Reverse Play and Picture Search in SP and SLP modes.
- Infrared remote control activates special effects, timer programming and most other VCR functions.
- 133-channel frequency-synthesis tuning features pinpoint accuracy on broadcast or cable channels.
- Compatible with RCA Digital Command Center, 2-in-1 remote control included with ColorTrak 2000 Monitor-Receivers.

#### HOLIDAY SPECIAL!!

#### Color Video Camera With "Color Viewfinder"

- Ultra low-light sensitivity—7 LUX
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- Automatic focusing
- 8:1 power zoom
- Remote Control for operating recorder
- Stop watch, auto dating and timer



Model #ICVC5038E

All product models are subject to change without notice.

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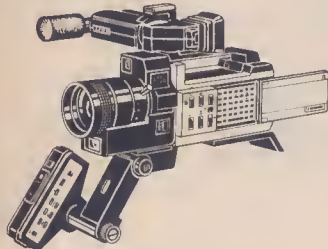
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**HOLIDAY  
SPECIALS!**

# VAL-U-LINE features MAGNAVOX/Panasonic

## Magnavox VR8283BK Deluxe Color Video Camera with Color Viewfinder

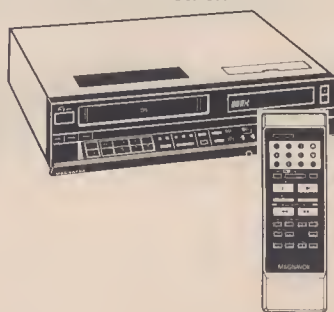
- Newvicon camera tube
- 1½" color viewfinder
- 7 Lux sensitivity
- Infrared automatic focus
- Stereo sound
- Full keypad character/stop watch generation
- F1.4 lens with macro
- Two-speed 8x power zoom
- 8 page memory with back-up
- Insert edition
- Tape counter



**ALL VHS  
CAMCORDERS  
IN STOCK**

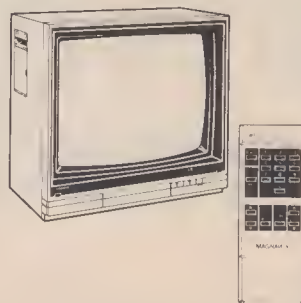
## Magnavox VR8560SL VHS VCR—Four-head Table Model with Remote

- Four-head front-load system
- Hi-Fi stereo sound
- On-screen programming display
- Field fine special effects
- 169 channel Frequency Synthesized random access tuning
- Tilt control panel
- 34-function IR remote control
- 21 day/8 event programmer
- 60-minute timer back-up
- Auto Index search



## Magnavox RD4502SL 25" Diagonal Table Model Computer Color 330 TV Monitor with Remote

- 100% solid-state chassis
- 100° in-line, matrix tube
- Digital control programmable scan tuning
- High resolution filter
- 134 total channel capability
- Infrared remote control
- LED time/channel display
- Spatial stereo switch
- Two 3" x 5" speakers



## Magnavox VR8555SL VHS VCR 8-hour Front Loading with Hi-Dynamic Hi-Fi Stereo Sound, 4 Head Video System and Wireless Remote Control

- HD Hi-Fi stereo sound
- Fast Motion, Variable Speed Slow Motion and Double-Speed Play in SP & SLP
- 21-function wireless remote control
- 2-week/4-program digital clock/timer
- 99-position/107 channel voltage synthesizer cable-compatible tuner
- Stand-By One Touch Recording
- Built-in Stereo/Bilingual Decoder
- Multi-Function Display
- SL/LP/SLP tape speed selector



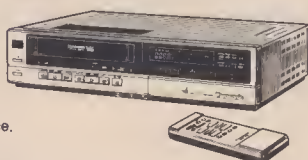
## Panasonic PV-200 Omni- Movie Combined Color Video Camera and VHS Recorder/Playback System

- Records/plays standard VHS tapes
- Instant playback with B/W Electronic Viewfinder
- Auto-Focus; 6:1 F1.4 power zoom lens with Macro
- ½" low light Newvicon pick-up tube
- Record/Review, Frame-Still and Omniseach
- Electronic counter with counter memory
- One touch white balance control
- Auto/manual iris control
- Auto-stop and rewind
- Battery balance indicator



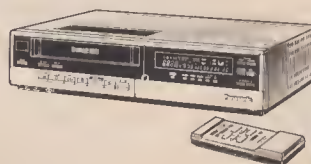
## Panasonic PV-1535 Omni- vision VHS 8-Hour Front- Load VCR with Tech-4 Video Head System and Remote

- Tech-4 Video Head System for noiseless, jitter-free special effects in SP and SLP
- Built-in 2-week/4-program digital clock/timer
- 17-function wireless remote control
- Multi-Function Display
- 14-position/107-channel pushbutton cable-compatible tuner
- Stand-By One Touch Recording
- Omniseach and Fast Motion in SP and SLP
- SP/LP/SLP speed selector
- Double-speed play in SP and SLP
- Auto-stop and rewind



## Panasonic PV-1340 Omni- vision VHS 8-Hour Front- Load VCR with Cable- Compatible Tuner and Wireless Remote Control

- Built-in 2-week/4-program digital clock/timer
- 16-function wireless remote control
- Multi-Function Display
- 99-position/107 channel voltage synthesizer cable-compatible tuner
- Stand-by One Touch Recording
- Omniseach, Still-Frame and Frame-Advance in SLP
- Double-speed play in SLP
- SP/LP/SLP speed selector
- Auto-stop and rewind
- Soft-touch controls



## Panasonic PV-8600 8-Hour Portable VCR with Slide-in Docking, Tech-4 Video Head System with remote and Dolby™

- Slide-in docking for recorder/tuner
- Tech-4 video head system for great special effects in SP and SLP
- Omniseach in all three speeds
- Dolby stereo recording and playback
- Recorder w/ batt. weighs only 7 lbs.
- 130-channel cable-compatible tuner
- 17-function wireless remote control
- 2-week/8-program clock/timer



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**SALES & SERVICE COAST-TO-COAST**

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## Videotests

rounds the tube.

Just below the frame is a black band with many pushbuttons. Below that is a wider silver band with speakers at each end. Next down comes the short black base with the room-light sensor at the left end and the 1/4-inch phone jack for headphones at far right. The left third of the black band above the speakers is all buttons, with one for Power at the extreme left followed by those for Stereo/Mono, Expanded Stereo or Simulated Stereo/Mono, Sleep Timer on/off, Personal Preference on/off, Antenna/ACC 1/ACC 2, A-V 1/A-V 2/Tuner, and last channel Recall.

Farther right are buttons for channel up/down Scan, indicators for SAP, Stereo, and Remote control commands, the sensor for the IR remote control, and Volume buttons. A tiny button above the Recall releases the door to the subsidiary control compartment.

The top of the door to the sub control compartment is between the Recall and Channel Scan buttons. The door spans both the black and silver bands. Just inside is the storage area for the remote. In the back of the compartment are sliders for Tint, Sharpness, Picture, Brightness, and Contrast. To their right are Up and Down buttons for Balance, Bass, and Treble, and a column with a button to select SAP/main, and switches for Cable/Normal and Scan/Program. Farthest right is a column with buttons for Time Set, plus Add and Delete for scan programming.

As usual the top, bottom, and sides are bare. The contoured plastic back panel bulges at the rear for the picture-tube neck. A bracket at top left holds the antenna. Left of the back panel are two depressions for connectors. At the top left are spring-loaded connectors for external speakers. To their right is a switch to change amplifier output between the internal and external speakers.

Several RCA jacks for line-level inputs

and outputs are arranged with associated jacks in the same row. The audio jacks are at the left, and the video jacks are at the right. The top row has jacks for the A/V 1 input. At the extremes are controls for audio and video input levels. Below that row is a similar row for the A/V 2 input, and then a row with a matching set of jacks for

*The picture is good but not snappy—but no two people have the same reaction to a TV picture*

loop-through output from A/V 2. These A/V 2 jacks are set off from the others by a red border. Below that are the audio and video Monitor outputs with fixed-level audio. Last is a set of audio outputs, their levels regulated by the set's Volume control. The latter audio outputs have no matching video output—it's meant to drive your stereo system.

In a smaller depression at the bottom left of the panel are three F connectors for RF inputs, one for the output of the RF switcher, and a cable normally hooked to the output connector. The remote is 1/2-inch thick by 2-5/16 inches wide by 5-3/4 inches deep. It is color-coded with the Power, Mute, Recall, and Alternate Channel on a blue field, the tuning controls on black, and the audio quality and volume on shiny silver. Most of the other controls are on a grey field—except the RF switching which is on orange, and the indicator for channels 100 to 125 which is on red.

**Operation.** Despite the set's many op-

tions, it is easy to operate. In fact, once you grasp the purpose of a video switcher, an audio switcher, and MTS sound, you'll refer to the manual only for information on the Personal Preference switch. You can guess all the other functions.

A little harder is connecting the various A/V inputs and outputs. If you want to videotape what is selected by the set, connect the VCR input to the set's Monitor Out jacks. To tape what's on the A/V 2 input while you watch something else, connect the VCR input to the A/V 2 loop-through. You may still end up switching connectors for maximum flexibility. Note, though, that we're talking about dubbing while watching different material, not about taping one show using the VCR's tuner while watching or using the set for something else.

**Performance.** We rate the picture as good because it is pleasant; however, in some areas you may want more. Horizontal resolution is 330 lines from RF sources and 350 from video sources. Video S/N is 51dB, chroma AM S/N is 46dB, and chroma PM S/N is 43dB. The measurements are very good—but when you try to adjust the controls for color, tint, brightness, picture, you'll find it difficult to maintain high brightness, saturated color, and high contrast with strong blacks and shadows at the same time. So the picture is good but not snappy.

Of course, with 2 by 3-inch speakers, don't look for earth-shattering bass. The speakers provide a frequency response of about 100 to 15,000 Hertz with a few minor peaks and dips. They do a creditable job and don't sound tinny. If you route the audio output to your Hi-Fi system, the A/V inputs offer a frequency response of 20 to 20,000 Hz within 3dB, with a S/N of 65dB and THD of 0.6 percent.

The MTS decoder does a good job of delivering stereo sound with a 50dB dynamic range, 36dB of separation, and a

### Test Report: Sylvania RKE1985L02 "Superset II" 19-inch MTS Monitor/Receiver

#### DATA

**Date of test:** September 1985

**Suggested retail price:** \$829.95

**Weight:** 66 lbs.

**Dimensions:** 18-1/2 x 19 x 18-3/4 inches  
(h x w x d)

**Power requirements:** 120VAC, 60Hz, 1.25A

**Screen size:** 20 inches (measured diagonally)

**Speaker size:** 2—2 x 3-inch speakers

**Type of tuning:** frequency synthesis

**Method of tuning:** up/down scan on set; up/down scan and keypad direct access on remote

**Tuning capability:** 82 broadcast channels—2 to 83; or 122 cable channels—2 to 13, A-1 (99), A-2 (98), A to I, J to W, etc. to 125 except 95, 96, 97

**Remote control:** IR wireless with buttons for Power, Mute, Alternate (previ-

ous) Channel, (display) Recall, 10-digit keypad, up/down channel scan, Volume up/down, Bass up/down, Treble up/down, Balance right/left, SAP/Main MTS, Expanded (stereo or synthesized stereo), 100 (for access of cable channels above 100), A/V1-A/V2-Antenna, Sleep Timer, Preferred Channel (favorite channel with audio and RF source preference), Antenna/ACC1/ACC2

**Video/stereo audio inputs:** 2

**Video/stereo audio output:** 1 Monitor Out (selected input), 1 A/V2 Out (A/V2 loop through)

**Video/stereo audio tuner output:** no

**Auxiliary stereo audio output:** yes, variable

**Headphone jack:** 1/4-inch phone type

**External speaker connectors:** yes, switchable

**Internal audio amplifier power:** 4

watts per channel

**Accessories:** remote control and battery, rabbit ears VHF and bow-tie UHF antennas

#### RESULTS & RATINGS

**Picture detail:** 330 lines RF in; 350 lines video in

**Snowiness:** S/N, luminance; 51dB

**Chromo AM S/N:** 46dB

**Chromo PM S/N:** 43dB

**Accuracy of colors:** good (see text)

**Overall picture quality:** good/very good

**Audio frequency response:** 20-20,000Hz, -3dB, video in (see text)

**Dynamic range:** 65dB

**Total harmonic distortion:** 0.6%

**Overall audio performance:** good

**Ease of operation:** very good

**Overall performance:** good/very good

## Videotests

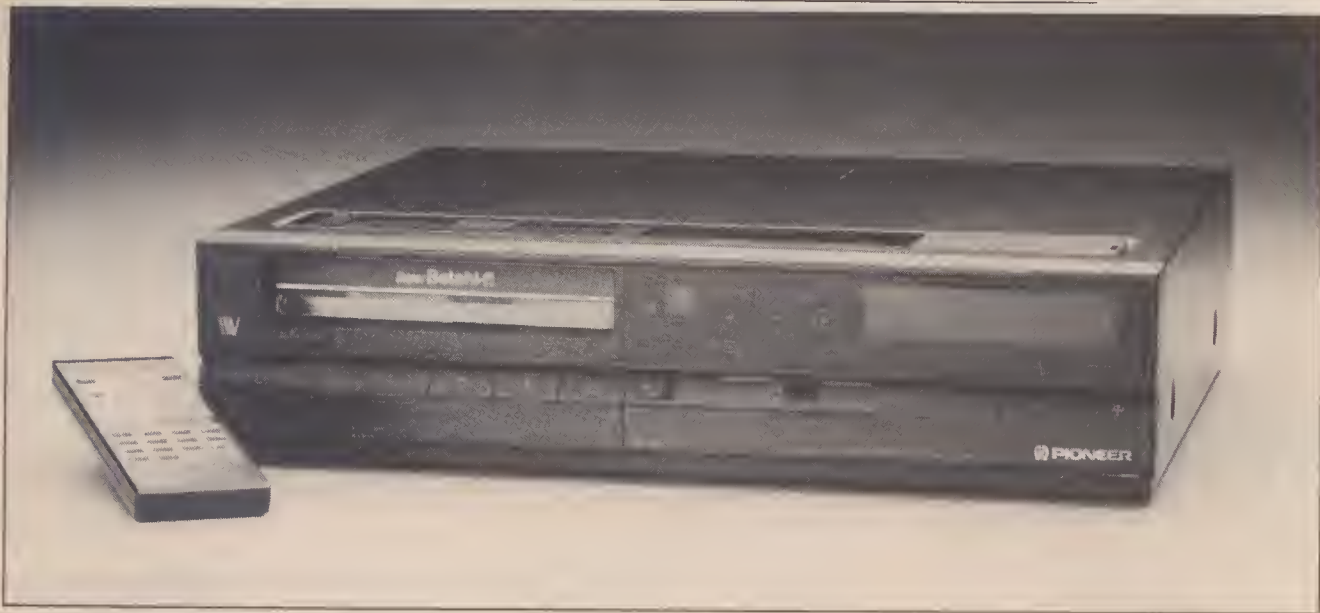
frequency response of 50 to 12,000 Hz. That's average compared with the other MTS TVs we've seen. SAP had about the same frequency response, but those are the limits of the SAP allocation. The Stereo Synthesizer/Stereo Expander does a good job of creating "depth" with the set's speakers, but tends to create a hole-in-the-middle effect when routed to a

stereo system with normal speaker placement. The synthesized stereo is pleasing.

**Conclusion.** If you're looking for a monitor/receiver with many bells and whistles and good performance, consider the RKE198SL02, though you might catch your breath at its \$829.95 suggested retail price. That is a fair price when you consider all the features Sylvania stuffed in.

However, if you're hunting for a perfect "10," keep looking. If we've learned anything in our seven years of reviewing for VIDEO it is that no two people seem to have the same reaction to a TV picture. It is like trying to swap eyeglasses with your neighbor—you almost certainly wear different prescriptions. The options and features, in any case, are worth a look.

## Pioneer SuperBeta Hi-Fi VCR with MTS



In video circles Pioneer is best-known for its LaserVision players. Recently, it added component systems and monitor/receivers. Now it has become one

of the few brands to boast all three VCR formats with its new offerings in the SuperBeta, VHS, and 8mm formats.

The two SuperBeta machines include the VX-90—quite similar to Sony's SL-HF900 ("Videotests," October 1985)—and the VX-50 reviewed here. The VX-50 is similar to Sony's SL-HF400 with the addition of a Control S input to enhance editing. Pioneer's decision to sell Beta machines represents one of the few recent additions to the Beta camp. However, since it will offer all the other formats as well as LV disc players, we should interpret the action as a display of Pioneer's total commitment to video.

SuperBeta, Hi-Fi, and MTS (multi-channel sound) are the VX-50's most significant features. Hi-Fi has been with us longest. In NTSC Beta machines, Hi-Fi sound is recorded as an FM signal sandwiched between the luminance (contrast) and chroma (color) video signals and recorded on tape by the video heads as part of the video signal. The result is a sound system second only to Compact Disc play-

ers.

Last year we saw the introduction of MTS. Only one VCR—a Mitsubishi VHS unit—had it. Of course it was a top model. Early this year a few more MTS models arrived, but again only at the top end. Now the feature has moved into midpriced machines, the group into which this VCR falls. A few machines with lower prices have MTS, but the process of correctly aligning an MTS decoder is so complex that VCRs with mono tuners will always be cheaper than MTS units.

The decoder in this Pioneer machine gives the maximum current sound recording options. You may record stereo on the left and right tracks plus the SAP (second audio program) on the mono linear track all at once. You may also record stereo on the stereo tracks and main audio, in mono, on the linear track. If MTS reception is poor, you may force mono recording on all tracks to reduce noise.

Last but not best is SuperBeta recording. SuperBeta offers both wider frequency response, hence more detail, and lower noise, for less graininess. These picture improvements are achieved by raising the luminance portion of the video signal 800 kilohertz up the frequency spectrum. The change should not affect the playback of SuperBeta tapes on recent Beta machines. But if you make tapes for friends with old Beta machines, they may have some play

back difficulties. If so, you should switch SuperBeta off. All the SuperBeta machines we've seen let you switch the feature off.

Other features include simulcast recording, a switchable MPX filter to screen out the FM stereo pilot tone, a PCM recording position, a sharpness control, a 6-event/7-day timer, and a Quick Timer (one-touch record).

**Description.** The VX-50 is black machine with small unobtrusive legends. That may not be as big a blessing as it sounds because the legends are a little hard to see in dim light. However, the colors on the remote are light and easy to see, even just by the glow of the TV screen. The VCR weighs 22 pounds, 1 ounce and is 4-1/4 inches high by 17 wide by 15-1/8 deep.

The top of the front panel is set off from the lower part by an indentation that tilts the row of controls across the middle. The upper part has the Power switch at far left followed by the cassette hatch with the Eject button as part of the hatch's lower lip. Most of the remainder of the top section is devoted to displays. The exceptions are buttons at the far right for Clock/Counter, Clear/Reset, TV/VCR, and Quick Timer. The latter lets you manually record the channel you've selected in half-hour increments for up to five hours.

The main display at far right provides clock, timer, counter, time remaining, tun-





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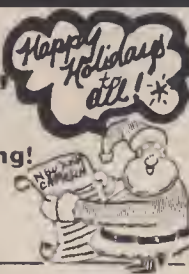
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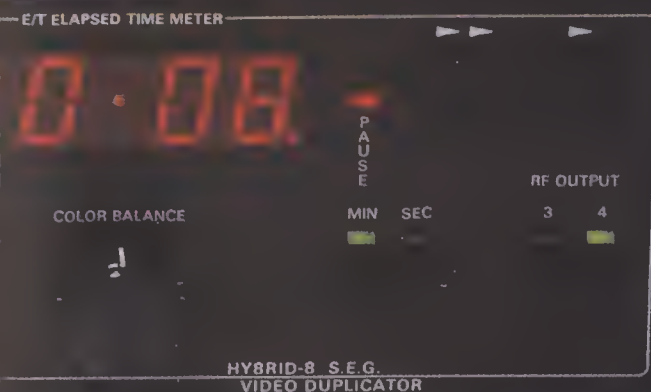
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• **Translucency Controls** brightness of all areas outside of Spotlight.

• **Horizontal and Vertical** Use to "shape" a spotlight

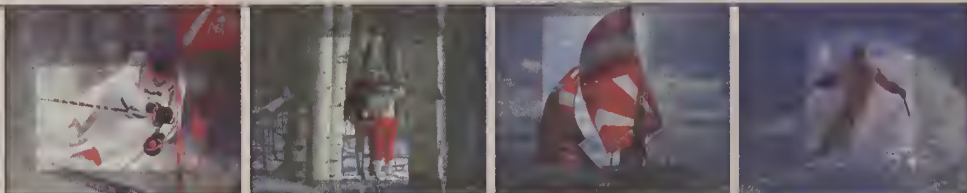
• **Auto/Manual Switches** select Auto. Manual operation of wipes.

• **A/B Switch** (remoted)



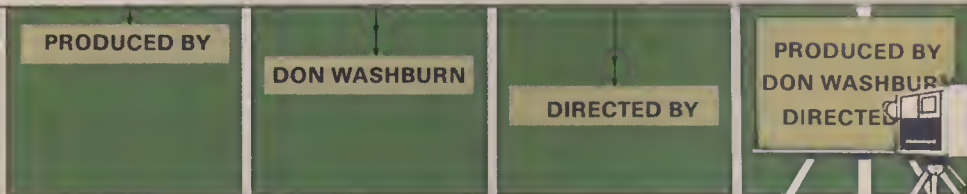
## Zipstick Controller Adds 4 More Unique Effects (optional)

**(1) Spotlighting** It's a bright frame. **How it works:** You manually converge wipes to form a spotlight, any shape. "Translucency" control reduces brightness of all areas outside the spotlight for proper contrast. Zipstick zips spotlight around the screen to highlight the person or object you desire.



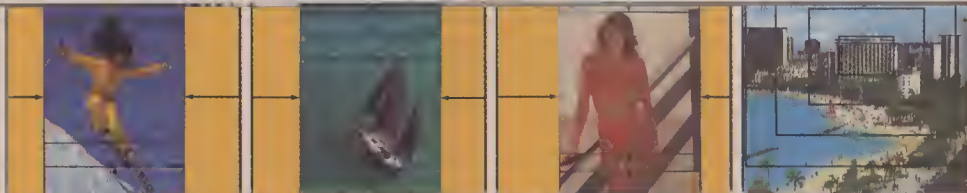
Use spotlighting to single out and highlight a person or object with a field of light.

**(2) Scrolling** It's a thin bright frame surrounded by color. **How it works:** Your Zipstick scrolls the frame down the screen to expose your credits. Use with camera and easel.



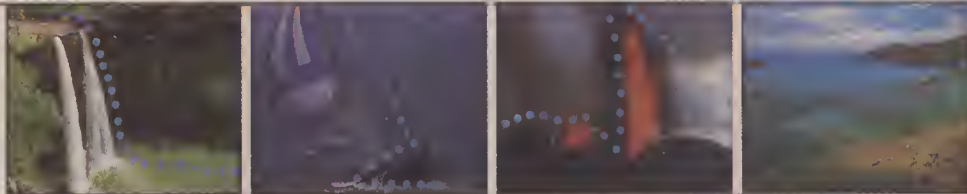
Scrolling is a good way to display credits. Use your camera and easel.

**(3) Targeted Converge** Presto! A wipe box shrinks to any target you choose left or right of center screen. **How it works:** Select a target center with Zipstick. V, on Manual. H, on Auto. Then turn Translucency to black, as you press Fade.



End your tape by converging to any dramatic event.

**(4) Bouncing Ball Effect** A tiny bright ball; an electronic pointer. **How it works:** Zipstick zooms ball around screen as you point out details. Usually used with VCR in freeze frame or live with camera.



Use bouncing ball to point out a particular feature or detail. Especially good for fine details.

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## Videotests

ing, and VCR-function information. Between that and the cassette hatch are discrete indicators for Beta Hi-Fi, MTS stereo signal, and SAP. The remote sensor is in the same line. Below is the Peak level audio indicator, in the same row with the four buttons mentioned above. On the narrow sloping band between the upper and lower areas are buttons for Rewind (Search), Play, Fast Forward (Search), Stop, and Pause/Still; a spring-loaded slide for Record, a single slider for stereo Hi-Fi level, and (+) and (-) buttons, primarily for tuning. The tuning buttons are also used when setting the clock and timer.

The lower front panel seems bare but tiny legends draw attention to three controls on the pedestal at the lower right: the Tracking control; the Input Select with positions for Tuner, Line/PCM, Line Audio (simulcast); and the MPX filter with positions for Off, On, and PCM. The right side of the area is a flap covering subsidiary controls. Within are SuperBeta On/Off, a rotary control for Sharpness, two Monitor Select slide switches for Stereo/Left/Right and Hi-Fi/Normal, small buttons for Beta II/III, Clock set, and program Check, large buttons for Timer Set and Next, and a red button for Timer On/Off. The "Next" button is used to set the clock and timer.

The side panels only have air holes, but on the top panel there is another control compartment. Inside are slide switches for

Auto Stereo, Normal Audio, AFT (automatic fine tuning), and RF Unit (output channel 3/4), a Set switch to activate the tuning memory, and pushbuttons to clear preset positions, scan through the frequency range, and set the channel number on the display. The RF and AFT switches

*The size of the controls makes them look good, but your fingers may prefer them larger*

are self explanatory.

The Auto Stereo in its On position feeds stereo to the Hi-Fi tracks if a stereo broadcast is being received; otherwise, it feeds mono. In its Off position it forces a mono signal onto both Hi-Fi tracks even if a stereo signal is being received. Such a mono signal usually has less noise. The feature is useful for receiving distant stations. The Normal Audio switch determines what will be recorded on the linear, or normal, track with the choice being either the main audio signal in mono or SAP

sound if that signal is present. If there is no SAP and the switch is in the SAP position, nothing is recorded on the linear track.

The Set button puts the tuner memory into its memorize mode. Then you can use the front-panel, not the remote, tuner-scan controls to select the preset to be programmed. A touch of the Clear button removes the previous setting, and the (+) and (-) controls step you through the tuning range, stopping at each active channel. Front panel indicators tell you signal's band and approximately where in the band it is. When you reach the channel you want, use the 10s and 1s buttons of the Channel No. group to set the channel-number display. Touching the Set button again memorizes all the changes you have made.

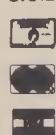
The rear panel has just one control, the Beta Hi-Fi On/Off switch. Pioneer probably put it there expecting it will always be set to On. We agree and would go one step further and make it a recessed switch so it could not be accidentally moved. After all, who would willingly switch off the better of the two audio systems and force the sole use of a mono linear track?

Also on the panel are the AC cord, an unswitched AC outlet, single RF input and output connectors (F type for combined VHF/UHF/Cable), video and stereo audio inputs and outputs, the Control 1 input and output, and the Control 2 input. The Control 1 jacks take and pass on remote-con-

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## Videotests

control signals from Pioneer's Foresight System, in which control information is daisy-chained through all the components. Control 2 is for connecting to Pioneer's VX-90 SuperBeta VCR for enhanced editing. It is similar to the Control S input on Sony SL-HF600.

The Remote control is 2/3-inch thick by 2-1/3 inches wide by 6-2/3 inches long and powered by two AAA cells. Although it is black like the VCR, the controls are easy to see because they are in various shades of grey while the legends are in distinctly

lighter greys. Two of the buttons are bright orange: Power and one of the two buttons to initiate Recording. The buttons are separated into three groups distinguished by background color. Farthest forward on a dark grey background are the buttons for Power and TV/VCR switching. Next on a light grey field are buttons for Rewind (Search), Fast Forward (Search), Play, Stop, Pause/Still, Record (two buttons), and the Channel +/- rocker. Farthest back on a dark grey background are 14 buttons labeled A through N for direct ac-

cess of the 14 presets.

**Operation.** Almost all the operations are very simple. Power, tape-transport, channel selection, clock/timer setting, and audio-output selection are foolproof. Even the SuperBeta, Sharpness, and audio Record settings are obvious. For automatic recording of Hi-Fi audio just put the slider at the 5 position, which is set off from the remainder of the scale by the color green.

Less obvious is the setting for the two switches at the lower left of the front panel. Both switches and their legends are a little hard to see unless the room is well lit. The switches are small slider types, and though a pointer shows switch position, the slider knob wiggles so it is hard to tell if the middle position is selected. Finally, either the switch or one of the switch positions could be given a better name.

On the Input Selector switch the position for simulcast recording is called Line Audio. This is accurate because it does record line audio with tuner picture, but this could still confuse the less sophisticated user. The name of the other switch, MPX (multiplex) Filter, is confusing if you don't know or understand how FM radio is broadcast. In FM radio a "pilot tone" is broadcast at 19 kiloHertz above the carrier frequency to tell the receiver that a stereo L-R signal is present. Since the VX-50 can record signals up to 20 kiloHertz, the filter must be on when recording simulcasts so that the tone won't be recorded.

The manual also omits telling you to set the switch to "on" in the section on recording simulcasts, but it does tell you in the main diagram describing the controls. The other position of the Filter switch is for PCM, and the manual leaves most discussion of that position to the instruction manual of the PCM adaptor. You may want to relabel these switches if the names confuse you.

The other operational problem involves tuning the presets. Fortunately, unless you have more than 14 favorite stations or use more than 14, you won't have to retune often. The procedure is actually simple—but when the tuner stops at a station, the front panel indicator gives you only an approximation of where the channel is. You have to wait until the station identifies itself or use *TV Guide* since the channel number displayed is the one entered into the memory by the last person who set the preset.

**Performance.** Picture quality is excellent compared to all non-SuperBeta VCRs and very good compared to the one other SuperBeta VCR we've tested—with one small reservation. The RF modulator is slightly sensitive to interference. Normally RF interference (RFI) affects tuners most. The tuner in this VCR is as resistant to RFI as the best we've tested, but not entirely. The tuner of the component system we used for these tests showed little sensitivity to RFI, but when the RF output of the VCR was used, RFI was visible. There

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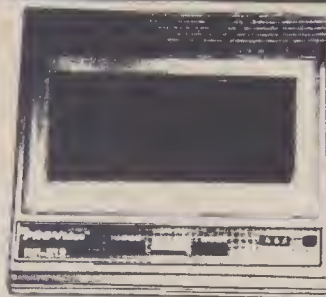
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**Test Report: Pioneer VX-50 SuperBeta Hi-Fi VCR with MTS**

**DATA**

**Date of test:** September 1985

**Suggested retail price:** \$800

**Weight:** 22 pounds, 1 ounce

**Dimensions:** 4-1/4 x 17 x 15-1/8 inches (h/w/d)

**Power requirements:** 120VAC, 50/60Hz

**Power consumption:** 42W

**Tape format:** SuperBeta

**Tape speeds:** Beta II, III, record; Beta

I, II, III, playback

**Play speed select:** automatic

**Still frame:** yes

**Frame advance:** no

**Slow motion:** no

**Speed play:** no

**Rapid search:** see Cue & review

**Cue & review:** 7X, Beta II; 15X, Beta III

**Visible FF and Rew:** no

**Fast forward/rewind time:** 3-1/2 minutes for L-750

**Remote pause:** yes

**Remote:** IR wireless with buttons for Power, TV/VCR, Rewind (Search), Fast Forward (Search), Play, Stop, Pause/Still, Record (2 buttons), Channel +/-, and 14 buttons for the direct access of the presets

**Separate eject:** yes

**Counter digits:** 4

**Counter memory:** yes

**Program start locator/index/cue:** no

**Audio dub:** no

**Video dub:** no

**Auto rewind:** yes

**Linear audio:** mono

**Hi-Fi audio:** stereo

**Tuning method:** 14 preset

**Channel selectors:** up/down scan of presets on VCR; up/down scan or direct access of 14 presets from remote

**Preset method:** semi-automatic, up/down (tuning) scan of channels in 4 bands; tuning stops at each active channel, if station is desired you set display separately

**MTS (multichannel television sound):** yes

**Tuning range:** 2 to 13, 14 to 83, A-1, A-2, A to W

**AFT:** switchable

**Channel lock:** yes

**Timer:** 6 programs, 7 days

**Battery backup:** "a few seconds" for timer memory; none for clock (runs slow by length of interruption)

**Auto channel-change:** yes

## RESULTS & RATINGS

**Horizontal resolution:** 280 lines

**S/N, video luminance:** 46dB, unweighted; 51.2dB, weighted

**S/N, chroma AM:** 46dB

**S/N, chroma PM:** 42dB

**Audio frequency response:** 20-20,000Hz, +0.3/-1.8dB, Hi-Fi; 60-12,000Hz, Beta II, 60-6300Hz, Beta II, linear (-3dB)

**Dynamic range, Hi-Fi:** 80dB

**S/N, audio:** 42dB

**Audio distortion:** 0.3%, Hi-Fi; 1.8%, linear

**Overall picture quality:** excellent/good (see text)

**Audio quality:** very good/excellent

**Ease of operation:** excellent/average (see text)

**Overall performance:** very good

was no visible RFI on the video output from the VCR. It appeared only when we operated it about three feet from our computer and the computer was running. Remember, we used the word "slight."

At the video output, video S/N was 46dB, unweighted, and 51.2dB, weighted. The weighted figure is the highest we've measured on a consumer VCR. Chroma AM S/N was 46dB and chroma PM S/N was 42dB—again outstanding measurements. Horizontal resolution was 280-plus lines with the Sharpness control at mid-point. So the picture is excellent at the video output and variable between good and excellent at the RF output.

The results for audio were very good to excellent, with a frequency response of 20 to 20,000 Hertz, +0.3/-1.8dB on the Hi-Fi tracks. Response on the linear tracks was

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60-12,000 Hertz at the -3dB points at Beta II, and 60-6300 Hertz at the -3dB points at Beta III. The Dynamic range of the Hi-Fi tracks was 80dB, and S/N on the linear track was 42dB. Total harmonic distortion was 0.3 percent on the Hi-Fi tracks and 1.8 percent on the linear track. In general, audio was very good to excellent.

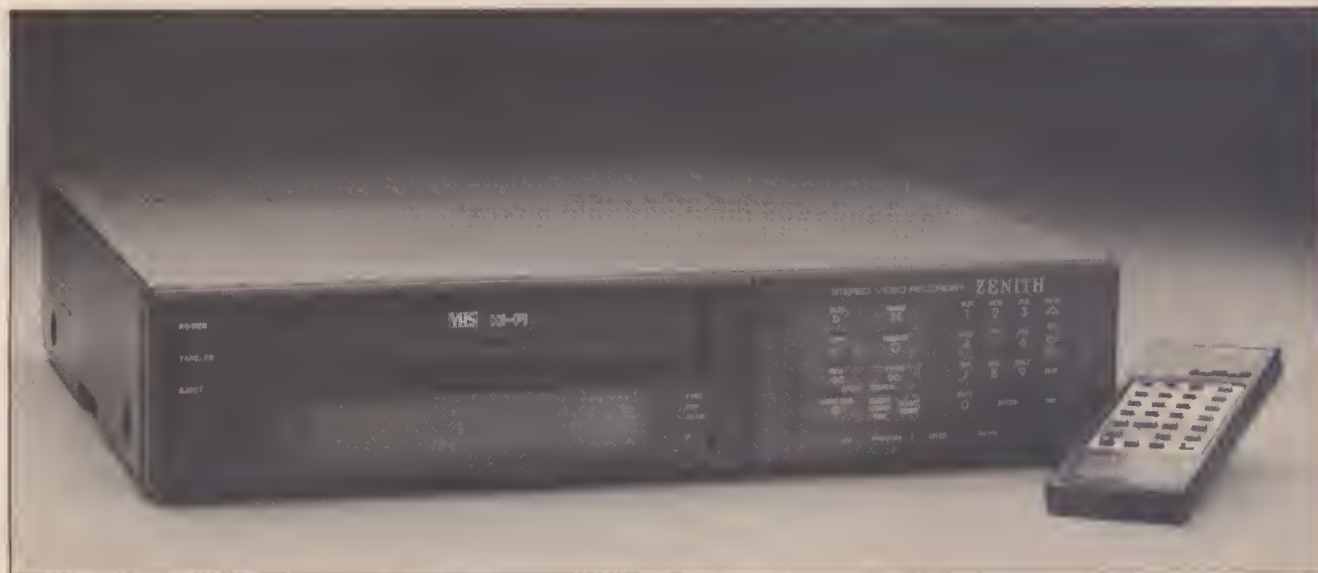
Basic operation is very easy but setting the input choices was troublesome because the controls were so tiny. Their size makes them look good, but your fingers may prefer them larger. Fortunately, the

two settings most people use, tuner and simulcast, are at the ends and easy to set. You'll experience annoyance getting it into the middle Line/PCM position.

You may also be slightly frustrated when setting the tuner presets, and the limit to 14 presets might be restrictive. If you have only a few favorite stations and tape only off-the-air programs, you'll defend this machine design fiercely. You'd also defend it if you were using it purely as a dubbing deck. Your only objection would come if you had to change presets or inputs often.

**Conclusion.** The VX-50 is an excellent performer with a few detractors. Its black styling is attractive but some of the tiny gold legends are hard to read. We've also pointed out a few less than excellent points on the video end, and on ease of operation. So its overall performance is lowered to very good. Its suggested retail price is \$800, and SuperBeta, Hi-Fi, and MTS features at that price add up to a very good deal. If you must limit your spending on a VCR strongly consider the VX-50.

## Zenith VHS Hi-Fi VCR with MTS



Zenith was one of the first companies to join the video ranks. It enlisted with a Beta machine. About two years ago it switched to the VHS format.

Zenith has brought one major contribution to VCRs regardless of format—a devotion to simplicity and to features that help users enjoy video recording and playback. It has largely succeeded. This new model is destined for success and probably will be copied. Most of the basic operating instructions are on a tape that accompanies the VCR. That tape is applicable both to the VCR3200 reviewed here and to the more modest VCR3100.

An instruction manual on videocassette may sound a mite crazy at first because you must hook up the VCR to view the tape. Zenith thought about that so it also supplies simplified hookup instruction with big pictures to get you started.

On the cassette, a color-coded bar near the bottom of the screen reminds you of the chapter, also color coded, you're viewing. The length of the bar acts as a countdown timer to tell you about how much of the chapter remains. Taped instruction is

not new, but Zenith is the first VCR brand to use such a tape extensively. Earlier attempts merely congratulated you on your purchase or added some helpful hints. One went as far as covering all the components of an A/V system in an hour. Zenith spends more than 40 minutes talking about the VCR, adding another 10 minutes of software promos.

The VR3200 definitely isn't a no-frills model with a gimmick cassette. It boasts Hi-Fi sound, a built-in MTS tuner, four video heads for optimum special effects at SP and EP (SLP) speeds, an 8-event/14-day timer, wireless remote control, and other niceties. You might wish for a few other items like recording and special effects at the LP speed, slow motion, speed play, video dub, and stereo linear tracks. However, at a modest list price of \$799, Zenith has packed in a lot of features. Other machines with all the items on our wish list have suggested prices of \$1200 to \$1500.

The VR3200 also offers one of the cleverest front-panel designs we've seen. The right third of the front panel is a membrane touchpad with controls for the basic transport, tuning, and programming functions. We're not the biggest fans of membrane pads, but this design uses their fea-

tures to the best advantage.

Because it is impervious to most corrosives, you can let jelly-fingered youngsters start, stop, or pause the machine without worry. (Don't let them change cassettes though: jelly on the cassette or inside the machine is still a big no-no.) Then you can clean up the mess with a damp cloth, confident you won't harm the machine. You won't have to worry about using that cooking tape while your hands are full of flour either. The second benefit of the membrane pad is that it is so thin. The pad is actually the cover of a compartment with all the subsidiary controls—a clever use of technology.

**Description.** The VR3200 is a compact black machine just 3-3/4 inches high by 17-3/16 wide by 14-7/8 deep. It weighs 22.5 pounds. At the top left of the front panel is a column of three buttons for Power, Tape/TV (TV/VCR), and Eject. Below is the window for the IR remote-control sensor. Between these and the control panel at right is the cassette hatch, above a giant display panel. The panel offers easy-to-see symbols for the various operating modes located above the switchable audio-level display at its left.

In the center are the day, time, and programming data, and at right is the



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VTM4200 tuner for 4200, cable ready 101 ch. Only 5 oz.	\$104	\$129
KV5300 5" color receiver, 3-way power, tinted glass screen, video & audio in-out. Only 7 lbs.	\$384	\$449
KV8100 7.7" screen, LED channel display, 3-way power, tinted glass screen 19 lbs.	\$367	\$419
KV9400 9" glare free tinted screen 14 button electronic tuning, LED display.	\$363	\$419
KV1365 13" monitor receiver, 155 ch cable-ready quartz synthesis tuning, mirrorblack screen.	\$258	\$299

## VCR's



### FISHER

	Cost	Usual Selling Price
FVH810 Front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 14-day, 3-event.	\$244	\$288
FVH815 Stereo, front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 14-day, 6-event.	\$315	\$379
FVH820 Stereo, 4-head front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 14-day, 8-event.	\$344	\$409
FVH830 4-head stereo, camera jack, MTS TV stereo built-in. Cable-ready wireless remote, 14-day, 9-event.	\$391	\$489
FVH840 4-Head, Hi Fi MTS stereo, cable-ready, wireless remote, 8-event, 14-day.	\$568	\$630

### TOSHIBA VHS

	Cost	Usual Selling Price
5020 VHS front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 7-day, 4-event.	\$250	\$299
5400 VHS 4-head front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 7-day, 4-event.	\$322	\$389

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KV1370R 13" monitor receiver, 155 ch cable-ready quartz synthesis tuning, mirrorblack screen, slephtimer remote control, upright design.	\$292	\$349
KV1371R 13" remote control, mirror-black screen. 155 ch cable pay TV ready, slephtimer, rosewood finish, HIT jack.	\$304	\$359
KV1770R 17" remote control, quartz tuning, 181 ch cable-ready, HIT jack, stereo ready MPX jack. Upright design.	\$371	\$419
KV1965 19" monitor receiver, mirrorblack screen, audio-video inputs, quartz tuning, cable ready	\$320	\$379
KV1966 19" monitor receiver, mirrorblack screen, 155 ch cable-ready, audio-video inputs, quartz tuning.	\$316	\$379
KV1972R 19" remote, quartz tuning, 181 ch cable-ready, MPX jack, stereo ready HIT slephtimer, mirrorblack screen.	\$382	\$449
KV1973R 19" remote control, 181 ch cable-ready, slephtimer, HIT stereo ready, on screen display.	\$391	\$459
KV1976R 19" remote, 181 ch cable-ready, stereo ready, timer/channel block, slephtimer, on screen display.	\$395	\$469
KV1981R 19" stereo monitor receiver, MTS/SAP quartz tuning, 181 ch cable-ready, dual speakers, slephtimer, remote control.	\$477	\$539
KV2084R 20" stereo monitor receiver, comb. filter, MTS/SAP 400 line resol., 4 spkr system, remote control, much more.	\$530	\$589
KV2670R 26" table model, quartz tuning, remote, 181 ch cable-ready, stereo ready, HIT comb filter.	\$560	\$625
KV2680R 26" remote stereo monitor receiver, MTS-SAP decoder, quartz tuning 181 ch cable-ready. Channel block-timer. Much more.	\$770	\$899
KV2681R 26" remote stereo monitor receiver, MTS-SAP decoder, pearl white, cable ready 181 ch, direct video inputs. Much more.	\$895	\$988

### ZENITH

VR1800 2-head wireless remote, Quartz tuner, front load.	\$238	\$289
VR1805 2-head wireless remote, Quartz tuner, front load, cable-ready.	NEW CALL	
VR2100 4-head front load, cable-ready, wireless remote, 14-day, 4-events.	\$330	\$389
VR3100 4-head direct access cable-ready, front loading, wireless full function remote, LED display.	NEW CALL	
VR3200 6-head Hi Fi MTS stereo 14-day, 8-event quartz tuner, wireless remote, DOLBY LED display.	\$595	\$679

### PANASONIC

PV1330 Front load 14-day, 2-event, 10 function wired remote.	\$247	\$289
PV1340 Front load 14-day, 4-event, cable-ready, 16-function wireless remote.	\$320	\$359
PV1535 4-head, front load, cable-ready, 14-day, 4-event, 17-function wireless remote.	\$365	\$399
PV1540 4-head, front load, cable-ready, 14-day, 4-event, direct access wireless remote.	\$425	\$479
PV1545 Hi Fi, 4-heads, front load, 14-day, 4-event, 21-function key pad remote, cable-ready.	\$521	\$589
PV1740 Hi Fi, 169 ch cable-ready, built-in MTS decoder, 4-head, 21-day, 8-event.	\$788	\$869
PV8500 Stereo 4-head portable, cable-ready, 14-day, 8-event, direct access 17 function remote, slow motion.	\$618	\$679
PV8600 Stackable dockable stereo, 4-head portable cable-ready, 14-day, 8-event, direct access, 17-function remote.	\$715	\$795
PV9600A Hi Fi, 4-head quartz tuning, stackable, portable, 14-day, 8-event, 17-function key pad direct access remote.	\$792	\$869

## VHS CAMERAS



### PANASONIC

	Cost	Usual Selling Price
PK412 1/2" newicon tube, 6X power zoom, F1-4 lens with macro 30 lux.	\$399	\$449
PK452 1/2" newicon tube auto focus, 6X zoom lens, 20 lux, F1.2 lens, date & time fade.	\$510	\$559
PK959 3/4" newicon auto focus 8X zoom lens, 7 lux stereo keyboard, character gen., scrolling graphics.	\$690	\$749
PK980 3/4" newicon auto focus 6MHz tube, 380 lines, 10X zoom lens, 10 lux scrolling graphics, stereo mode.	\$790	\$899
PK976 3/4" newicon 6MHz tube, 15X zoom, C mount lens, 30 lux, scrolling graphics mode.	NEW CALL	

## VHS CAMCORDERS



All units 4-head auto focus 10 lux low light. Includes battery, ac adapter, strap and USA Warranty.

Quasar VM10	\$1120	\$1229
Magnavox 8290	\$1120	\$1229
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Panasonic PV200	\$1185	\$1249
General Electric 6060	\$1120	\$1199

### IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

Olympus VX402	\$1190	\$1299
Pentax PVC11A	NEW	CALL

### 8MM CAMCORDERS

Sony CCD-V8	\$1085	\$1249
Sony CCD-V8AF	NEW	CALL
Canon VME1	NEW	CALL
General Electric 508C	\$625	\$709

### BETA CAMCORDERS

Sony BMC550	\$912	\$979
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three-digit channel display. Three digits are needed because you can tune up to 178 different frequencies between regular broadcast channels and cable channels. To the right of the large display area are discrete LED indicators for Stereo, Mono, 2nd Audio (SAP), and SP speed.

The right third of the front panel is the membrane pad with the controls separated into three groups. Nearer the center of the VCR are four rows with the transport controls. The top one has Play and Pause, the second has Stop and Record, and the third has Rewind (Search) and Fast Forward (Search). The lowest row of this group has three buttons instead of two for Audio Dub, Clock/Counter/Time Remaining, and counter Reset.

The group at the right is for tuning and timer programming. It consists of the 10 digits, and buttons for Enter, Skip, Dim (display), and Up/Down channel scan. Most of these buttons do double duty. In normal operation the names we've given describe the obvious functions. All except Enter, Skip, and Dim change roles in the programming mode. The digits from 1 to 7 become the days of the week, 8 becomes the 2nd Week selector, 9 becomes the Daily selector, and 0 becomes the Repeat selector. The Up/Down scan buttons become the Back and Next selectors.

The third group of controls runs along the bottom of the pad and selects Clock Adjust, Program, SP/EP, AM/PM, and Program Cancel. The SP/EP selector on this panel determines the speed at which Timer recordings are to be made and you can preset the machine to change speeds for different timed recordings. A different switch selects the recording speed for manual operations.

If you put your fingers at the right edge of the machine and tug gently, the membrane pad swings down to reveal the concealed control compartment. At the left of the compartment are three rows of controls, each with a minijack at the right side. From top to bottom the jacks are for channel 1/left mic, channel 2/right mic, and stereo headphones. At the left end of each row are rotary controls. In the top row, the two rotary controls are for manual Hi-Fi audio recording level (left and right), followed by switches for audio AGC (automatic gain control—auto/manual), audio Level Indicator (Level/Off/Tracking), input Mode Select (Tuner/Simulcast/Aux), tuner AFC (automatic frequency control—Normal/Special), and the Instant Record button.

The second row includes a rotary Tracking control followed by a blank area and switches for Counter Memory (On/Off), Tape Remaining computer (T-120/T-160), tuner Band (range—TV/CATV/HRC), and Timer (On/Off). In the bottom row are rotary controls for Sharpness and (head-) Phones Level followed by switches for Audio Out Monitor (two switches—Stereo/Ch 1/Ch 2 and Normal/Mix/Hi-Fi), at-

tended recording speed SP/EP, and (MTS) Audio Mode (Stereo/Mono/2nd Audio). It does sound complicated but the instruction tape and manual explain it all carefully. When in doubt, you can always put all the

**Zenith's 3200 sounds complicated and much of the operation is intuitive, but the manual is thorough.**

slide switches to the left and center all the controls for basic SP recording.

The top, bottom, and sides are bare. The back is a bit simpler than usual because the RF inputs are combined, as are the outputs. Most RF devices normally have separate inputs and outputs for VHF and UHF; in this case they are united into a single F connector. The accessory pack provides a combiner for the input to the VCR and a splitter to be used at the TV.

One weakness is that the combiner is for twin-lead antenna cables—that can be a problem if your antenna system uses coaxial cable. If you're connecting to a cable system, the single input is actually simpler. The other occupants of the back panel are the AC cord, an unswitched outlet, a Channel 3/4 RF output selector, inputs and outputs for video and stereo audio, and a sub-mini jack for Camera Remote Pause.

The remote control is thin and long. It controls more than just the VCR. If you have certain, not all, Zenith TVs from as far back as 1981, they too will obey its signals. Your dealer should be able to tell you if your set will work with this remote. Buttons are provided to control Power, random-access or scan tuning, volume Up/Down, Enter/Recall, Source, Mute, TV/Tape, and Space Phone in addition to the common VCR transport functions. These are Play, Stop, Rewind (Search), Fast Forward (Search), Pause, and Record (two buttons). As you can see, some of the TV controls are quite exotic.

**Operation.** Much of the 3200's operation is intuitive. A look at the instruction tape answers any simple questions. If you always use the same recording speed and automatic audio level, you may be able to

## Test Report: Zenith VR3200 VHS Hi-Fi VCR with MTS

### DATA

**Date of test:** September 1985

**Suggested retail price:** \$799

**Dimensions:** 3-3/4 x 17-3/16 x 14-7/8 inches (h/w/d)

**Power requirements:** 120VAC, 60Hz

**Power consumption:** 40W

**Tape format:** VHS Hi-Fi

**Tape speeds:** SP, LP, record; SP, LP, EP (SLP), playback

**Play speed select:** automatic

**Still frame:** yes, SP and EP only

**Frame advance:** Press Pause while in still mode

**Slow motion:** no (see text for tip)

**Speed play:** no

**Rapid search:** see Cue & review

**Cue & review:** 7X, SP and EP only

**Visible FF and Rew:** no

**Fast forward/rewind time:** 3 min. 40 sec. for T-120

**Remote (comer) pause:** yes

**Remote:** IR wireless, with Play, Record (2 buttons), Stop, Fast Forward (Search), Rewind (Search), Pause (Frame Advance), Channel up/down Scan, Channel keypad, Enter/recall, Power, TV/Tape view, and TV/VCR switch which determines which device remote will address; additional buttons are provided for TV control: Volume up/down, TV Stereo, Source, Space Phone, A-D PC, and Mute, which work with certain Zenith TVs and are not described in the VCR manual

**Separate eject:** yes

**Counter digits:** 4 or time remaining in hours and minutes

**Counter memory:** yes

**Program start locator/index/cue:** no

**Audio dub:** yes

**Video dub:** no

**Auto rewind:** yes

**Linear track:** mono

**Hi-Fi:** stereo

**Tuning method:** quartz controlled electronic

**Channel selectors:** up/down scan plus keypad random access on both remote and VCR

**Preset method:** Skip or Enter in scan sequence

**Tuning range:** TV—2-13, 14-69; CATV—2 to 4, A-8 (00), 5 to 13, A-2 (0), A-1 (1), A to W, AA to ZZ, AAA to BBB, plus 56 more Ultraband channels

**AFT:** yes, labeled AFC norm/spcl

**Channel lock:** yes

**Timer:** 8 programs, 14 days

**Battery backup for clock/timer:** 1 hour

**Auto channel-change:** yes

**Accessories:** Instruction cassette, remote control with battery, antenna cable, VHF/UHF splitter, VHF/UHF mixer

## RESULTS & RATINGS

**Horizontal resolution:** 240 lines

**S/N, video luminance:** rated, 43dB; measured, 41.4dB, unweighted; 45.2dB, weighted

**S/N, chroma AM:** 41dB

**S/N, chroma PM:** 39.5dB

**Audio frequency response:** 20-20,000Hz, +0.5/-2.7dB, Hi-Fi; 80-16,000Hz, +/-3dB, SP; 100-5000Hz, +3.3/-3dB, EP, linear

**Dynamic range, Hi-Fi:** 80dB

**S/N, linear audio:** 42dB

**Total harmonic distortion:** 0.4%, Hi-Fi; 2.1%, linear

**Overall picture quality:** very good

**Audio quality:** very good (see text)

**Ease of operation:** excellent (see text)

**Overall performance:** very good



# Do you hear bullets ricocheting across your living room, or turbulent waterfalls crashing down the stairs when you watch TV?

If you hear dump trucks roaring across your living room, cannons exploding all around you, and rain drops splattering the floor when you watch TV, then you probably already have a Teledapter. However, if you don't, read on.

If you have a TV and a stereo system you can enjoy the excitement you've been missing...now! The Teledapter's unique electronics will combine your TV and stereo into a powerful entertainment center that would easily cost thousands of dollars.

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All TV, satellite, cable, and VCR programs will have the same powerful sound as your stereo system and speakers.

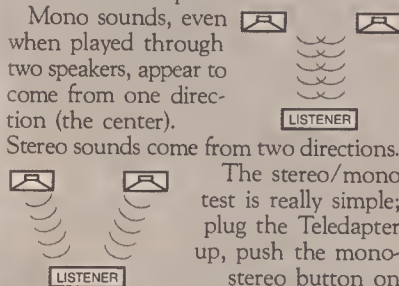
## FEATURES

**Stereo-Plex™ Circuitry** is for all those mono TV's and VCR's. It transforms their mono sound into sparkling two-channel stereo effects. Got a stereo TV or VCR? No problem. Just plug them in. Since most TV and cable programming is mono, the Stereo-Plex circuitry will pick up where your stereo TV or VCR stops short.

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Stereo sounds come from two directions.

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Teledapter comes complete with all cables, instructions, and a FREE HELpline phone number.

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your stereo. When you go from mono to stereo, listen to the sounds spread out across the room. Perform the test without a Teledapter and a mono signal will remain in the center.

**Ambiance and Spatial Circuits** expand a stereo signal to greater separation than it normally has.

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**DNR®** is the latest marvel in noise reduction. It works with all mono or stereo programs, and preserves the Teledapter's excellent 20 to 20,000Hz frequency response.

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# Turn your TV into a powerful entertainment center with the STEREO TELEDAPTER®

set the switches on the subpanel and forget they exist—then operation will be a breeze. As usual, we flirted with the thought of swapping switches from the subpanel to the main panel and vice versa. In the end we decided Zenith had made good compromises and were reasonably content. The only exception was our desire to trade the Dim button for the Counter Memory switch—or better yet, swap Dim with OTR so it would be more accessible. Anything else would ruin the simple operation.

**Performance.** Zenith makes no outrageous claims for the VR3200's performance. Our tests show that the machine meets or exceeds specifications. Picture detail is typical of VHS and standard Beta VCRs with 240 lines of horizontal resolution. Though improvements, both announced and unannounced, have been made in the VHS format, none compare with the 280-300-line picture of SuperBe-

ta. The 3200 delivers a video signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) of 41.4dB, unweighted, and 45.2dB, weighted. Zenith's spec is 43dB, weighting unspecified. On chroma AM S/N the measurement is 41dB, and on chroma PM S/N it is 39.5dB. No chroma specs are given. Although the chroma S/Ns are a little low, the picture is still very good compared with current VHS machines.

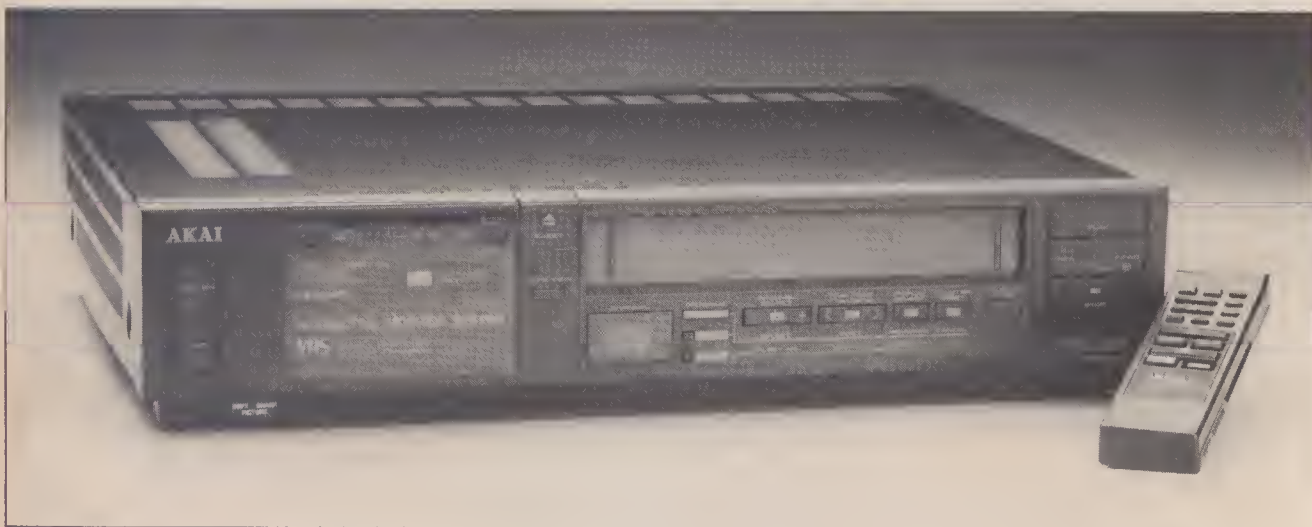
We rated audio performance as very good—but with one outstanding and unusual measurement averaged in. The outstanding trait was that on the linear track at SP speed, frequency response stretched out to 16 kiloHertz before dropping to -3dB. This is the first time we've measured any VCR with linear track response so high.

The strange measurement was on the linear track at EP (SLP) speed. At the high-frequency end here was a peak of +3.3dB between 3 and 4 kiloHertz. Since

we normally give frequency response figures within a + or -3dB limit we would rate frequency response at EP as 100-2500Hz +/-3dB. This time we have chosen to give the measurement as 100-5000Hz, +3.3/-3dB as it better describes the VCR's performance. On the Hi-Fi tracks frequency response was 20-20,000Hz, +0.5/-2.7dB, and its dynamic range was 80dB as specified. Total harmonic distortion on Hi-Fi was 0.4%, and 2.1% on the linear tracks.

**Conclusion.** The VR3200 is a good blend of price, features and performance. It provides very good overall performance with a modest set of the most used features for less than \$800, suggested retail. Like many machines it doesn't record at LP but to not even offer search at LP may be a put-off to some who choose that speed as a compromise between quality and expense. Otherwise the 3200 is an attractive machine for those who must add price as a major factor in choosing a VCR.

## Akai VS-303U VHS VCR



Akai's VS-303U looks much like the VS-616U reviewed last month—but since it is not a Hi-Fi machine, all the controls associated with Hi-Fi could be

omitted. It is easy to tell which is the 303 by the absence of the audio recording-level indicators to the right of the timer button. The 303 is a much more basic machine with a mono linear soundtrack. Of course, with no stereo capability, it would be a waste to put in a stereo MTS tuner, and Akai eliminated the SAP circuitry as well since that MTS feature is seeing little use at present.

It seems strange to review a mono VCR in 1985 since stereo VCRs have been available for more than two years. Many of us still have mono TVs which we haven't connected to our stereo systems for better sound. Broadcast stereo TV (MTS) is still

in its infancy though about 70 percent of all American households have access to at least one stereo channel. If all you want to do is time-shift TV programs and play the occasional rented movie, you can get by with a mono VCR. Moreover, to many, just getting a good picture and acceptable sound is grounds for celebration.

Though a basic VCR, the 303 is not a barebones model. Among its top features is a full-function wireless remote control and picture search. Among many VCR features, wireless remote seems to be the second most popular after search. Other goodies that make it attractive are its four-program/four-week timer plus a sleep timer that lets you record the end of a show you're too tired to continue watching.

Another feature it borrows from its higher-priced brothers: onscreen indicators. Apart from a few LEDs, all the important data about VCR operation appears on screen. The displays go out after about

four seconds. The most useful display is the counter, but that is one display we wish had been duplicated on the front panel. It is hard to edit when the only display is onscreen. Another feature not usually found on basic machines is adjustable Sharpness. Here it is a three-position switch—soft/normal/sharp—instead of a continuous rotary control, but it is still a welcome addition.

One feature we miss is LP recording speed. Even more restrictive is the lack of still, search, and other effects on LP playback. Also missing, but less glaringly, are audio and video dub and extra video heads for fewer, smaller noise bands in special-effect modes. Another annoyance comes in adjusting the tuning presets, but they are adjusted so infrequently that it is not a major complaint. Remember, though, Akai left these items out to keep the price reasonable.

**Description.** The VS-303U is an all







## Videotests

black model that measures 3.9 inches high by 17.3 wide by 14.5 deep and weighs 17.6 pounds. It has fewer buttons than usual because four serve multiple uses. These buttons have blue legends. Along with the red legends on Record and Pause/Still, and the all-blue Program button they add a discreet touch of color.

Almost all the controls are on the front panel. At far left is the Power button with the Timer button below it. On the lower lip of the front panel is a three-position sharpness switch called Picture. The next few inches of the front panel look a little busy—not because of controls, but because of the unusual amount of printing. The top band of this area has its two controls, switches for TV/Video (TV/VCR) and SP/SLP recording speed, plus indicators for Video, SP, SLP, and Standby which is always lit when the VCR is plugged in. In the area below, with the legends, is the sensor for IR remote. Between this and the cassette hatch are the Eject button at the top edge and the button that lights up the tuning compartment.

The cassette hatch, right of center, uses a smoke-grey door and a compartment light to signal that a cassette is inside. You may switch the light off with the Tape View switch. Below the hatch, at left, is the channel display, and to its right is a column of three buttons. The large blue one on top puts the timer into Program mode. The two smaller ones trigger Clock set, and (channel) Preset modes.

Farther right are four multifunction buttons and a fifth for Return To 0000. The multifunction buttons labeled A, B, C, and D do triple duty dependent on which of the Program, Clock, or Preset modes are selected. Buttons A and B are actually rocker buttons labeled (+/-) and (/) respectively. At far right are wide buttons for Play, Re-

wind/Fast Forward (a rocker), and Stop with smaller ones below them for Pause/Still and Record.

The rear panel is quite simple, with the AC cord coming out at the far left. Most of the center is uninteresting except for a slotted bulge covering a heat sink. In a depression at the top right are the video and mono audio inputs and outputs. Below are the VHF and UHF inputs and outputs plus a Channel 3/4 switch for the VCR RF output. The top, bottom, and sides are bare except for ventilation holes.

The remote control is long and slim. The controls on it are divided into two groups. The one farther forward has buttons for Function (Power), Timer on/off, Program, Return To 0000, Auto Mute, TV/Video, and buttons that echo A, B, C and D. Like those on the front panel, A and B are rockers. The buttons in the second group reflect the tape-motion controls at the right of the panel, but Rewind and Fast Forward are separate buttons instead of a rocker. The full lineup is Play, Rewind, Fast Forward, Stop, Pause/Still, and Record which is red and recessed. Function, Timer, and Pause/Still are colored orange to make them stand out against the black of the remote.

**Operation.** Installing the VCR is easy if you're using the RF output, and just slightly more complex if you're using the video/audio jacks. Loading and unloading the tape, attended recording, and playing the tape are easy operations, but you must become accustomed to locking Search and pressing Play to get out of Still, and Record to get out of Pause.

Using the multifunction buttons to set the clock and timer is relatively easy, as is using them for the Channel selection, Fine Tuning (record mode), Tracking (play mode), Display Selection, and Counter Re-

set. Using them to set the tuning presets is more complex because they change function as you progress through the steps. You must use the onscreen display or you're sure to get lost. Fortunately, few people change the presets often. The other adjustments are a breeze.

**Performance.** The Akai VS-303U makes no attempt to be fantastic on sound. It devotes most of its capability to delivering a good picture. It offers horizontal resolution of 240 lines and its video signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) at the SP speed is 46dB, unweighted, 50.2dB, weighted. Video S/N is 1dB lower at SLP—that is as good as any non-SuperBeta half-inch VCR delivers. Chroma AM S/N is 47dB at SP, but only 43.2dB at SLP. Similarly, Chroma PM-S/N is 42.8dB at SP and 40.2dB at SLP. Such jumps between speeds are unusual. Yet even if you take the lower numbers, the results are still very good to excellent.

Audio performance is much more modest since the 303 does not offer Hi-Fi sound. SP frequency response at -3dB is 160 to 10,000 Hertz, and if you use -10dB that some manufacturers quote, frequency response at the low end extends to 63 Hertz. Akai may have used that limit to derive its spec. At SLP speed the -3dB frequency response is 100-6300 Hertz. Audio S/N was 36dB, a bit weaker than the spec, and total harmonic distortion was 2.1 percent.

**Conclusion.** The Akai VS-303U, at \$599.95 suggested retail, is not the least expensive VHS VCR. The picture it delivers is very good and the mono linear audio just good. Its features are between average and good. With those ratings we rank it merely as an average value only because of price. If you can find it at a lower price, it might be a contender among basic VCRs.

### Test Report: Akai VS-303U VHS VCR DATA

**Date of test:** September 1985

**Suggested retail price:** \$600

**Weight:** 17.6 pounds

**Dimensions:** 3.9 x 17.3 x 14.5 inches (h/w/d)

**Power requirements:** 120VAC, 60Hz

**Power consumption:** 33W

**Tape format:** VHS

**Tape speeds:** SP, LP, recording; SP, LP, SLP, playback

**Play speed select:** automatic

**Still frame:** yes, optimized for SLP; not available on LP; use Play to continue

**Frame advance:** yes, using Pause/Still button

**Slow motion:** no

**Speed play:** no

**Rapid search:** see Cue & review

**Cue & review:** 5X, SP; 15X, SLP; not available on LP tapes

**Visible FF and Rew:** no

**Fast forward/rewind time:** 4 minutes for T-120 cassette

**Remote pause:** no

**Remote:** IR wireless with buttons for

Function (Power), Timer, Program, multi-purpose rockers A and B, and multi-purpose buttons C and D, Return to 0000, Mute, TV/Video (TV/VCR), Play, Rewind (locking Search), Fast Forward (locking Search), Stop, Pause/Still, and Record

**Separate eject:** yes

**Counter digits:** 4 on TV screen, with counter reset

**Counter memory:** return to 0000

**Program start locator/index/cue:** no

**Audio dub:** no

**Video dub:** no

**Auto rewind:** yes

**Linear audio:** mono

**Hi-Fi audio:** none

**Tuning method:** 16 station preset

**Channel selectors:** up/down scan on both remote and VCR

**Preset method:** scan through channels, select, set display

**Tuning readiness:** 35 channels cable, 2-6, 7-13, A-I, and J-W; 82 channels broadcast, 2-6, 7-13, 14-83

**AFT:** manual

**Channel lock:** yes

**Timer:** 4 programs, 4 weeks plus sleep

timer

**Auto channel-change:** yes

**Accessories:** Remote control and batteries, antenna cable, matching transformer

### RESULTS & RATINGS

**Horizontal resolution:** 240 lines (SP), rated and measured at both speeds

**S/N, video luminance:** 43dB, rated; 46dB (SP), 45dB (SLP), un-weighted; 50.5dB (SP), 49.7dB (SLP), weighted, measured

**S/N, chroma AM:** 47dB (SP), 43.2dB (SLP), measured

**S/N, chroma PM:** 42.8dB (SP), 40.2dB (SLP), measured

**Audio frequency response:** 100-10,000Hz (SP), rated; 160-10,000Hz, -3dB, (SP); 100-6300Hz, -3dB (SLP), measured (see text)

**S/N, audio:** more than 40dB, rated; 36dB, measured

**Audio distortion:** 2.1%

**Overall picture quality:** very good/excellent

**Audio quality:** good

**Ease of operation:** good



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STARRING: Ginger Lynn, Harry Reems, Lise De Leeuw, Jamie Gillis, Nina Hartley, Eric Edwards, Janey Robbins, Paul Thomas, Amber Lynn, Richard Pacheco and Kitten Natividad



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## THIS MONTHS TOP 40

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 TEN LITTLE MAIDENS ★       | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 NOTHING TO HIDE        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 SEX WAVES                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 PINK LAGOON            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 RAW TALENT                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 ALICE IN WONDERLAND    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 STIFF COMPETITION          | <input type="checkbox"/> 24 PRETTY AS YOU FEEL     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 GRAFENBERG SPOT            | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 TITILLATION            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 DEADLY LOVE                | <input type="checkbox"/> 26 REAR ACTION GIRLS      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 BAD GIRLS III              | <input type="checkbox"/> 27 IRRESISTIBLE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 CAUGHT FROM BEHIND         | <input type="checkbox"/> 28 SUZIE SUPERSTAR        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 SPITFIRE                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 29 TABOO                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 BROWN SUGAR               | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 TRINITY BROWN          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11 FIRESTORM                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 31 PLEASURE HUNT          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 EVERY WOMAN HAS A FANTASY | <input type="checkbox"/> 32 SURRENDER IN PARADISE  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 INSATIABLE II             | <input type="checkbox"/> 33 DEVIL IN MISS JONES II |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 NEW WAVE HOOKERS          | <input type="checkbox"/> 34 TALK DIRTY TO ME III   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 DEEP THROAT               | <input type="checkbox"/> 35 SCOUNDRELS             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 IN LOVE                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 36 THROAT 12 YEARS AFTER  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17 SEX WORLD                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 37 X-FACTOR               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 INTIMATE COUPLES          | <input type="checkbox"/> 38 DEBBIE DOES OALLAS     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19 1001 EROTIC NIGHTS        | <input type="checkbox"/> 39 BEHIND THE GREEN OOR   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20 SWEET YOUNG FOXES         | <input type="checkbox"/> 40 MISTY BEETHOVEN        |

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continued from page 155

are unwilling to give the public what the labels hope it wants, maybe other kinds of retailers will—and of course how much you will pay for them. In this conflict movies are not mere entertainment; they are product, pieces of fun in a box, and the video companies want you to want them *forever*, not just for a one-night stand.

Last year Paramount Home Video cut prices on some of its biggest movies to \$24.95 for the holiday season. Videophiles bought almost 1.5 million movies in response. Walt Disney Home Video had sold family and children-oriented films and cartoons in other holiday promotions, but Paramount's "25 for 25" marked the first time such a general collection of movies sold so well.

This year Paramount and Disney have again cut prices on many of their biggest movies, and Vestron has tried the same technique—all selecting their strongest titles and pricing them to tempt purchases. Meanwhile MGM/UA has taken a bunch of its older MGM movies, wrapped themes around them like "Great Books" and "Diamond Jubilee," and put them on sale.

Film companies have goals they're looking to achieve by putting hot products on sale at low prices. One is to outflank the buying and selling of used videocassettes. Instead of selling their used tapes to you, many stores go to used tape brokers who buy tapes that are no longer renting and then sell them to other stores.

Film firms feel this hurts their sales, and a price cutting move like Vestron's or Paramount's is a direct attack on used tape brokers. Suddenly the value of the used tapes they've bought is cut in half. If you're smart, you can get great buys on tapes that aren't on sale by persuading your local store to sell you its used cassettes cheap. At least one major retail chain will be selling copies of RCA/Columbia's \$79.95 *Ghostbusters* at \$29.95 this Christmas, with all of the low-priced copies coming straight from the outlet's rental shelves.

A second goal is to prepare for the arrival of the giant stores, the K-Marts and Montgomery Wards of the world. When only a few Americans had VCRs, these huge chains stayed away from prerecorded tapes. Now VCRs are in at least a quarter of all American households, and they want in, fast. But a big store doesn't want to deal with the hassles of rental. It wants tapes that sell quickly, without any trouble. That's where low-priced programs come in. They provide all the cheap video any big store could ever want. This could make your life as a video collector a lot easier. Because mass merchandisers sell so many things other than prerecorded tapes, they can afford to almost give away movies just to get customers inside their doors. Watch your local newspapers for large ads for cheap movies coming from big stores.

You'll need to move fast for some of the bigger movies because they're being pulled off the market after the sales are over, not

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## The labels want you to want videocassettes forever, not just for a one-night stand.

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to return for an unknown period of time. That's the case with *Pinocchio* and *Beverly Hills Cop*—and for all the promotions save MGM/UA's, prices will go up again at the end of December or some time in January.

The video industry splits movies into two categories: new-release and catalogue. A movie that's just out on videocassette is a "new release" until it's about six months old, then it turns into "catalogue." So many catalogue titles are being put out at low prices this holiday season that retailers are already calling 1985 the "year of the catalogue Christmas."

*Beverly Hills Cop*, at \$29.95, is the only blockbuster new-release movie to come out at a low price this holiday season. Although Paramount isn't saying it out loud, if retailers don't do a good job selling the movie, it'll probably be the last big film you'll see for a long time to come out at \$29.95. Obviously Paramount wants you to buy—not rent—this Eddie Murphy hit.

None of these companies are subtle about what they want you to do with the cassettes you buy. Paramount is including a Christmas stocking with each of the cassettes it sells for as long as supplies last. Vestron calls its promotion "VideoGift" and includes 27 programs.

What goodies can you get? Vestron divides its loot into five categories: movies, music, specialty, comedy, and children's programming. All of the programs involved cost \$24.95 or less. The movies include a variety of populist goodies: *Mr. Mom* with Michael Keaton and Teri Garr, *Breathless* starring Richard Gere, *Easy Money* with Rodney Dangerfield, *The Woman in Red* with Gene Wilder and Kelly Le Brock, *Irreconcilable Differences* with Ryan O'Neal and Shelley Long, *Mad Max* with Mel Gibson, *Gorky Park* with William Hurt, *The Care Bears Movie*, *The Beach Boys: An American Band*, *Good Guys Wear Black* with Chuck Norris, and *Stagecoach* with John Wayne.

The music has the smell of success about it: *Making Michael Jackson's Thriller*, *Video Rewind—The Rolling Stones Greatest Video Hits*, *Linda Ronstadt—What's New*, and *Neil Diamond: Love at the Greek*.

Videos in other categories are: *The Winning Edge—Private Lessons with the Pros* with John McEnroe and Ivan Lendl and *Weight Watchers Magazine Guide to a Healthy Life Style* with Lynn Redgrave; *Richard Pryor: Live in Concert*, *Truly*

*Tasteless Jokes*, *The Smurfs and the Magic Flute*, *Puff the Magic Dragon*, *Rainbow Brite in Peril in the Pits*, *Rainbow Brite and the Mighty Monstromurk Menace*, *Poochie*, and *Benji's Very Own Christmas Story*.

All of the above titles are list-priced at \$24.95. Going for \$19.95 will be *My Little Pony* and *Ziggy's Gift*.

You've already had a chance to buy 13 movies in Paramount's latest "25 for 25" promotion. They were on sale last year at \$24.95. This year the company has added spice to the mix, putting Irving Berlin's *White Christmas* on sale on videocassette for the first time as part of its campaign. Two programs in "25 for 25" aren't movies: *Eddie Murphy's Delirious* and *Galagher: The Maddest*.

The movies include gems like *Chinatown* and *Trading Places*, along with *An Officer and a Gentleman*, *Airplane!*, *Death Wish*, *Flashdance*, *48 HRS*, *Grease*, *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*, *Heaven Can Wait*, *Harold and Maude*, *The Jazz Singer*, *Meatballs*, *The Odd Couple*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *The Sons of Katie Elder*, *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, *Uncommon Valor*, *Urban Cowboy* and *Warriors*.

Disney is selling 21 movies this Christmas season for \$29.95 each, and it'll sell you a program for just \$9.95 if you buy any one of its films: *The Walt Disney Comedy and Magic Review*, a 30-minute collection of footage assembled for this campaign. *Pinocchio*, which cost \$79.95 just a few months ago, is the biggest title in the Disney campaign. But the Disney program is full of favorites: *Mary Poppins*, *Dumbo* and *Robin Hood* are just a few of the movies that are sale-priced for the season.

If you bought *Pinocchio* earlier this year, you know what a Guinea pig feels like after the experiment is over. *Pinocchio* is a perfect example of what the home video industry calls "two-tier pricing"—putting a movie out first at a high price to get a share of retailer's rental income, then lowering the price later to tempt you to buy.

If you own a \$79.95 copy of *Pinocchio* and have problems with it, you can get a refund of \$29.95 by returning the cassette to Disney. If you bought a \$29.95 copy, you'll get back what you paid. But you can't get refunded the gap in price. (Mail to Walt Disney Home Video, 500 S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, Calif. 91521.)

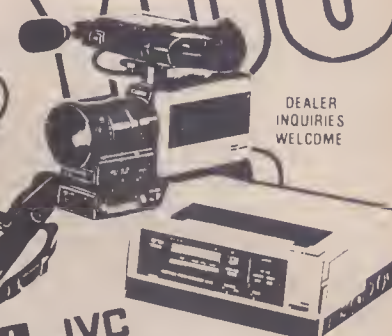
MGM/UA has more classic films than any other company in the video business. It created its "Great Books" and "Diamond Jubilee" collections to package them. This holiday season it's added movies to both collections and cut prices to \$24.95. These packages are different than the sales Paramount, Vestron, and Disney have set up. Because of a web of contracts and deals and weak performance by the company's film studio, MGM/UA has few hot films in its catalog that are under 40 years old. Rather than put these older films out one at

continued on page 200




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## Starting Out

*continued from page 108*

editors have selected the Maxell HGX Gold (costing around \$17 for T-120 VHS, L-750 Beta) and TDK HD Pro (about \$17.40 for T-120, L-750) as among this year's best. They are the highest grades you'll find but you can save a few dollars by trying out the EXG T-120 from Scotch or the SG-T-120 from Fuji (both about \$10).

## The Next Step

That's as far as you need to go to begin your acquaintance with video. It may be only the beginning, but remember—no matter how experienced you get, you'll always remember your first choices.

## Getting Obsessed

*continued from page 116*

equalizer can be used for ordinary stereo or rear-speaker amplification. The AV-C10 incorporates a video input for a monitor/receiver and an RF output. Its audio circuits include terminals for two tape recorders for mix dubbing, and an audio insert switch for simulcast recording and overdubbing on videotape.

Few videophiles are likely to be disappointed by these sophisticated selections provided they suit the video equipment they already own. In fact they may be pleasantly surprised by your savvy in ferreting them out, and that can count as a gift to yourself.

## Carried Away

*continued from page 121*

solution? Try the method pros use: a "patch bay", which is a board filled with jacks, each jack in turn connected to the audio and video jacks of every machine and accessory in your system. To make a dub or watch a program, you merely have to plug a patch cable into the appropriate jacks to connect anything to anything.

It's clearly the most flexible, reliable, and uncompromising system available, and can be easily expanded to handle up to a dozen VCRs or more. Trompeter Electronics makes patch bays for both audio and video use. A JS-14 panel, equipped with enough jacks for three VCR's, two monitors and two accessories, costs under \$200.

Ever get caught short without the right adapter cable? Comprehensive Video offers two excellent kits, each selling for \$100, designed to help connect virtually any VCRs—consumer, industrial or professional. For the do-it-yourselfer, Comprehensive also offers a complete line of crimp-on cable kits, making it easy to cut your own cables and attach connectors for fast, easy, professional results—and it's cheaper than buying store-bought cables, too!



There are a lot more videophile gift ideas we could recommend, but we'll try to be conservative this time out. Santa Claus should be a sympathetic reader of our Christmas wish list, since it's well-known that he's a videophile of long-standing, and owns a full-blown satellite system, VCRs of all formats, multiple monitors and big-screen TVs and more tapes than you could shake a reindeer at.

Being a big kid himself, he knows finding any one of these mouth-watering videophile delights under the tree on Christmas morning would be more than enough to turn any adult into an excited kid once more. **V**

## Sources

**Anvil Cases**, 4128 Temple City Blvd., Rosemead, Calif. 91770 (213-575-8614).

**Electronic Specialists, Inc.**, 171 S. Main St., Natick, Mass. 01760 (617-655-1532).

**Ewa Underwater Housings**, Pioneer & Co., 216 Haddon Avenue, Westmont, NJ 08108.

**Halliburton Video Cases**, Berkey Marketing Co., 25-20 Brooklyn-Queens Expressway West, Woodside, NY 11477 (212-832-4040).

**JVC Company of America**, 41 Slater Drive, Elmwood Park, NJ 07407 (201-794-3900; 800-526-5308).

**Instant Replay**, 2951 S. Bayshore Drive, 8th Floor, Coconut Grove, Fla. 33133 (305-448-7088).

**Kiwi Photo Luggage**, Div. of Northern Mercantile, Inc., 1030 E. 30 St., Hialeah, Fla. 33013 (305-835-8228).

**Mitsubishi Electric Sales Corp.** 3010 E. Victoria St., Rancho Dominguez, Calif. 90221 (714-220-2500).

**Panasonic Company**, 1 Panasonic Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094 (201-348-7999).

**Saft America/Electronic Systems Division**, 2414 W. 14 St., Tempe, Ariz. 85281.

**Sony Corporation of America**, 1 Sony Drive, Park Ridge, NJ 07656 (201-930-6000).

**3M Company**, Video Products Division, 3M Center, St. Paul, Minn. 55144 (612-733-5000).

**Trompeter Electronics**, 8936 Comanche Avenue, Chatsworth, Calif. 91311 (213-882-1020).

**Z-Bag Video Cases**, Athletic Bag Co., Box 27273, Salt Lake City, Utah 84127 (800-453-8736).

## Lt.'s Woman

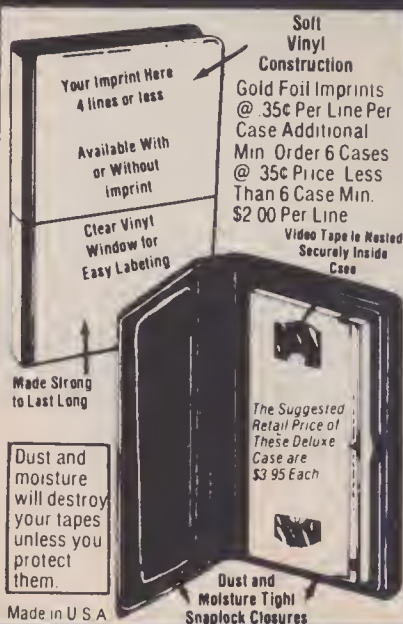
*continued from page 126*

sion took them by surprise—is the moment when their personalities begin their strange exchange or transference.

The shift of their identities is augmented by the film's use of mirrors as indicators of reflection and distortion, feelings carried forward by the many spyglasses and magnifying lenses that are present. Immediately following our introduction to Anna-as-Sarah, glimpsed in a small round mirror, Charles is seen studying fossils

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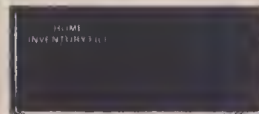
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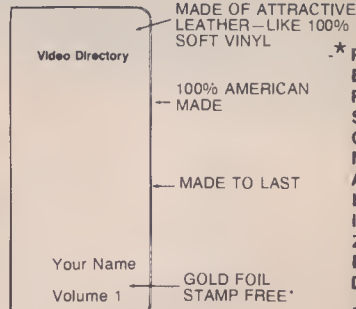


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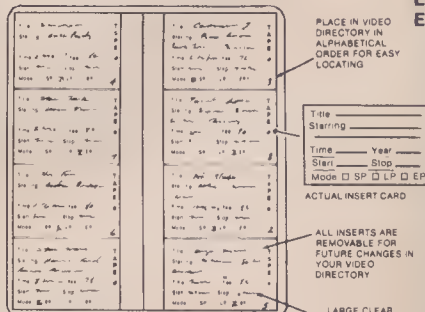
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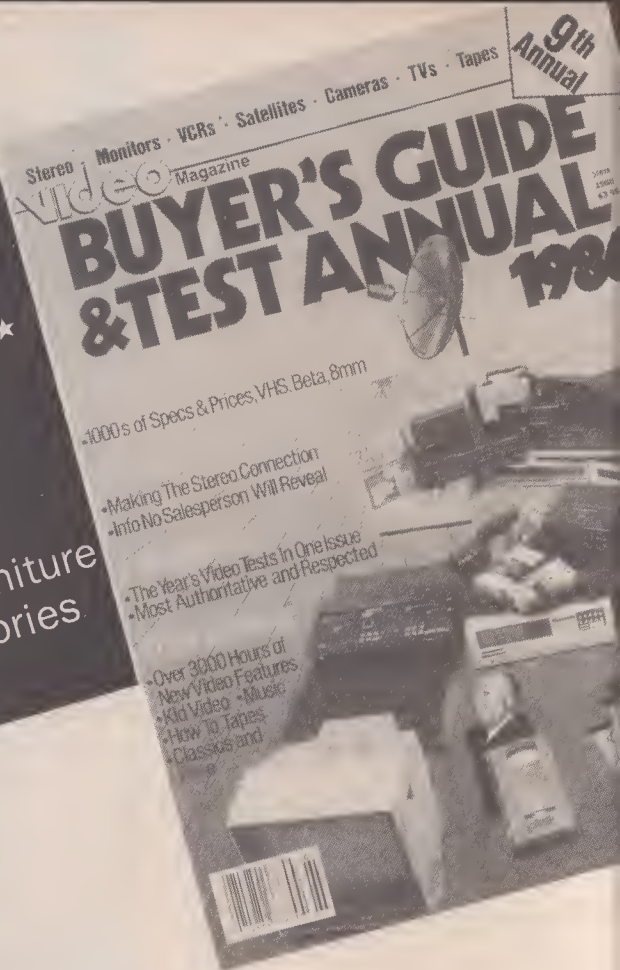
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through a magnifying glass. He watches others also, and finally Sarah, with a small telescope.

Dr. Grogan, the local champion of Darwin, keeps a telescope as well. "I use it to keep an eye out for mermaids," he jokes. And like ancient rocks, the Victorian newspapers are often scanned by characters with magnifying lenses. These props are not simply conveniences. Much less are they naive symbols of faulty vision or rampant curiosity. They are part of the film's complex markers that link seeing to action, acting to performance, and performing, finally, to being.

The mirrors, telescopes and magnifying lenses are perhaps most of all signs that the past, which is always glimpsed as "just behind," is curiously significant when "brought up close" to the present. Just as Sarah first turns back toward Charles' shouting on the pier (Anna's most frequent pose is glancing backward), so the gap is narrowed that separates Anna's vision from Sarah's, and Mike's from that of Charles.

The Victorian couple thus lead one another into a kingdom of illusions in a story which emphasizes spyglasses and telescopes and a nervous foraging amid rocks and fossils. Dr. Grogan watches for imaginary creatures just as Sarah scans the sea for an imaginary lover, just as Charles at last scans the sea, watching and waiting in hope of his lost love. The film, with its cool, precise compassion, indicts the illusion of a romanticized past by linking it with an equally problematic present, by making the flashback in fact a flash forward, as in the leap from the rehearsal of Sarah's fall to the rehearsed fall-become-reality.

It is also part of the film's profound maturity that it refuses to endorse the facile therapeutic model for the healing of memories. Dr. Grogan protests that if Sarah could confide the real state of her mind, "she would be cured of it—but she does not wish to be cured." In the next scene she indeed talks, at great length, to Charles. But her 'cure' is achieved only by a maturation in time, and the healing of memories is accomplished only by freedom from romantic illusion—not by facile (and untrue) discourse.

This also discloses for us the reason for all the nature imagery in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Sarah's long monologue is spoken in the depths of the forest, only one of many scenes of nature arching over the human condition. Sea and wind and trees and bird calls and animal sounds surround the characters, envelop them. Wild nature pulls Sarah to the ground in the storm, forcing her to seek refuge in a barn. Charles proposes to Ernestina in an enclosed garden, and Mike and Anna rehearse in an enclosed garden. As Anna later tells Mike's wife, "I really envy you...for being able to create such a lovely garden." There is, after all, something in our troubled, evolving nature that longs for a lovely garden.

In this regard, Dr. Grogan may swear

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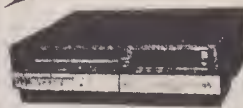
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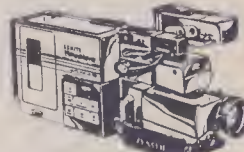


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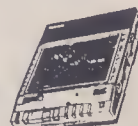


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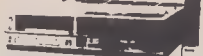
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his oath on a copy of Darwin's seminal *The Origin of species*, but people plight troth, exchange confidences and draw near each other in quiet gardens. If the literalist, Bible-thumping Mrs. Poulteney, who stands for an angry Victorian morality, is empty of human feeling, so is the smug scientism of Dr. Grogan and the omniscient Darwinians. Their chilly gaze takes small account of the force imagination and passion play in human evolution. "My dear man, you are half in love with her," Grogan says to Charles. "You have committed a crime. It will fester in you all your life."

All these elements come together in the end, at Mike's home, where fashionable art posters—for *Children of the Garden* and *Samson and Delilah*—highlight the themes of betrayal, of the fallen garden, and of unexpected falls and shifts in strength.

### All Fall Down

Supporting the theme of evolution in a fallen garden are the many falls in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. The rehearsed fall by Anna is patently artificial. But during the rehearsal she does the action too well, and cries in pain as she really

falls and bruises herself. She says she wants to rehearse once more, and the action is repeated. But at once the image is replaced on the screen by the photographed fall of Anna-as-Sarah, which seems to us much more real.

In fact it is a measure of the film's brilliant reversal of our expectations that everything about the settings and 'performance' of the Sarah/Charles story is more authentic than the Anna/Mike story. This is not because the Anna/Mike story is unexplored (it is, after all, fully explored in the story of Sarah and Charles). It is because when we watch Anna and Mike we are more aware of watching Meryl Streep and Jeremy Irons *playing film actors*. When we return to the Undercliff at Lyme, with Meryl-Anna and Jeremy-Mike ever more deeply within the Platonic circles of a *double* illusion (now as Sarah and Charles), we are, oddly, more comfortable. Such is our need to understand truth *not in spite of, but through the illusion of art*.

The point receives its ultimate reinforcement when Sarah, in the Exeter hotel, pretends a sprained ankle. "Be thankful it did not happen on the Undercliff," Charles says. His remark recalls the 'filmed' version of the rehearsed fall, when he said, "I dread to think what would happen if you should one day turn your ankle in a place like this." The play-acting inspires her with the play for a real-life deception.

In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, the world of illusion (and, by inference, the world of art the filmmakers are creating) overwhelms the world of appearances. The perfectly acted gesture becomes the real one, yet this itself is obviously rehearsed, 'unreal.' The actress who accidentally slips during a rehearsal, after all, is Meryl Streep, doing just what has been rehearsed off-camera. As analogues to these falls, we see the drunken fall of Charles at his club, and finally, Sarah's fall in the upper room of the Elliott home, when Charles berates her for abandoning him. Some may deny humanity's fall, but it is a condition that accurately describes us at every stage of our evolution.

Further links between the couples (who become a universal couple and in fact a universal personality-in-the-making) are provided by the servants, Sam and Mary (Hilton McRae and Emily Morgan). They act as surrogates, even correlatives, for Charles and Sarah. Sam brings flowers to Mary as Charles sends them to Ernestina and brings them to her lawn. The servants, like their employers, meet in the woods and, also like them, speak of freedom and are eager for a life of their own choosing, to have their own businesses, to control their own destinies. Sam has his eye on a draper-haberdasher shop—a place Anna visits to select the dress for her last scene as Sarah.

All these components are skillfully integrated. Freddie Francis' cinematography is an inspired portfolio of luminous images, an album of designs that construct mood

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and theme, shape, light and feeling. Carl Davis' acute, evocative music, with its admixtures of Mozart and modern dissonance, is supportive rather than intrusive. And the flawless performances have been conducted by the hand of Karel Reisz, who demonstrates a canny sensitivity and a profound spiritual kinship between himself, Harold Pinter and John Fowles.

These gifted artists have given us not so much a story about the mystery of time and memory and personhood as they have made it possible to experience that mystery. For *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is not a film we merely watch. It is a film that beholds us, that discloses us to ourselves in the manner of all true art. It projects against the span of our own memory and experiences, our own life-history, and it is perhaps approached best as a poem, so that we relinquish our demand for a narrative line with a recognizable beginning, a logical development and a reasonable conclusion.

The film is not a simple didactic narrative about destroying illusions as part of a program of evolution or maturation. In fact it suggests that illusions are all we have in this world: film is, after all, the most illusory form. The illusions become dangerous only when they are not beheld as illusions, only when they are considered finally real. This is why the cinematic swift cut, the leap in time and space, is the film's ultimate metaphor.

In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Pinter and Reisz bring us very close to the philosopher Henri Bergson's concept of an eternal flow in time, of an evolution of the spirit even greater than the evolution of the flesh. They present time transfixed, yet ever in motion, bending back to measure lives tilting in the winds of illusion. It is a film suffused with a sense of tragedy, but of ennobling tragedy which it clearly distinguishes from a bogus and sour cynicism—ennobling, finally, because it holds the lamp of forgiveness amid a dark confusion of human resentment.

This spirit touches us and informs the final moments of the film with a haunting, reverent ambiguity, as the gentle boat ride draws for us Mike's yearning for an ideal, and Charles' hope of reconciliation. Longing is human and reasonable not perhaps because life is a dream and a fear, but because we are needy creatures, evolving, incomplete, frail and divided from ourselves. We yearn because it is our nature to yearn. 

## Budget VCRs

*continued from page 133*

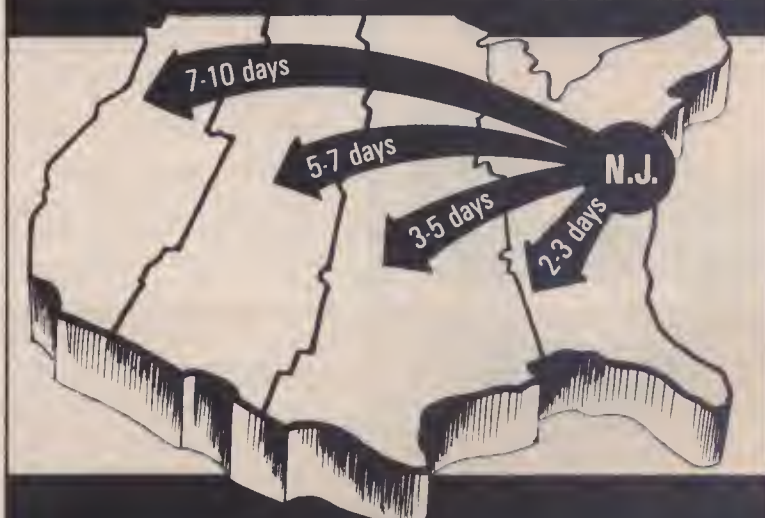
cable TV! Not so—you've got to subscribe to a cable service.

Even if you are a cable subscriber, buying a cable-capable VCR won't necessarily solve all your problems. Many of the cheaper VCRs have only 12 or 14 presettable pushbuttons for tuning in the channels

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you want to see. Since many will be taken up by the regular VHF channels you want to record, few will be left over for the basic cable channels you may want to add. A "basic" cable channel, by the way, is one that isn't scrambled, and for which you don't have to pay any additional monthly subscription fee.

If you subscribe to HBO, Showtime or any other premium cable service, you'll probably find its signal scrambled in a way that renders your cable-ready VCR almost useless, since you're compelled to record everything coming out of the cable box on a single channel, usually Channel 3.

In short, don't be oversold by the lure of "cable capability" or the number of channels a specific VCR can allegedly receive. If you have cable now or plan to get it, check with the cable company first so you'll know beforehand what kind of system it uses.

For the record, many more expensive VCRs not included in this survey are equipped with solid-state tuners that don't limit channel access to a dozen or so presets. Many of these receive virtually all channels being cable-cast, often without any need for the cable company's decoder box. But scrambled channels present special problems even for cable operators since they have to be wired through a descrambler to obtain a viewable picture.

## One-Touch-Record

Since this is a relatively simple and inexpensive feature to add to a VCR, it's showing up on even the cheapest machines. It goes by several names or initials, including Instant Record, One Button Record, and Express Record. But it works the same regardless; one or two presses of the button puts the machine into the Record mode on the channel you've preselected, with the machine automatically turning itself off when the time has elapsed. OTR is useful for spontaneous late-night taping sessions when you only want to record the end of a show you've already begun to watch. Unlike the regular timer mode, OTR can be activated even if the machine is already recording.

## Stereo and Hi-Fi Sound

Surprisingly, a few budget-priced VCRs offer this capability. I haven't found any low-end machines just yet with the latest MTS (stereo TV) tuners, but some will let you play and record your own stereo videotapes. On the VHS side, most stereo machines offer linear two-track recording with Dolby noise reduction. Sorry, no budget-priced VHS Hi-Fi machines just yet. But inexpensive Beta Hi-Fi models abound, led by Sanyo, whose low-priced (\$349 list) VCR-7150 was announced right at presstime.

## New vs. Discontinued

With millions of VCRs already sold this year and millions more yet to be sold, video inventory is swelling. Depending on where you live and where you shop, you may have

a great many more VCRs to choose from in your "budget" price range than I've been able to include in the chart. That's because, in many cases, some dealers are still selling what's left of their inventory from last year or the spring line. It's getting harder to tell new models from the old ones given some of the subtle nuances the manufacturers are building into their lines. The only difference between the Panasonic PV-1330, included in our chart, and the cosmetically identical PV-1332, for example, is the latter machine's additional 23-channel cable capability.

But there's nothing wrong with buying a recently discontinued machine if you know what you're getting. Often, you can get it at a better price, since the dealer wants to clear out these models to make room for newer ones.

How can you tell this year's crop from last year's? Model numbers occasionally tell the story. RCA's 1985 line can be identified by the letter L in the model number. A VLT-385 is a current machine, while its discontinued predecessor was the VKT-385. Magnavox designates its 1985 line with the year in the model number, the VR-8510, for example. G.E.'s current line is its sixth, hence the number 6 in the numbers of the latest machines. Last year's machines had a 5, as in the 1VCR5018. With many other brands, where the model numbers seem to jump all over the map from year to year, you've just got to rely on the dealer's or manufacturer's claims as to what's current.

Because of the overwhelming selection of VCRs now available, I've limited my selection of "budget" models to the least expensive "leader" machine currently available from each of these manufacturers and distributors. But don't overlook the many other economical models that didn't make the chart this time around. Where the trend a few years ago was to have a low-end machine and a high-end model, most manufacturers now deploy as many as a 12 or more models at a time. (RCA had 14 at presstime!) Keeping track of them all is a big job and more than a few consumers are justifiably confused when they try to pick the machine that represents the best combination of features for the money. Sometimes it helps to remember that many of the machines sold under different brand names are made by one manufacturer. If you notice similarities between the machines sold by Panasonic, Quasar, Magnavox, G.E., Curtis Mathes and J.C. Penney, for example, it's because they all come out from the same factory. The same brand "cloning" is now spreading to the machines made in Korea and Taiwan—brands that weren't even on the market last year.

With many of these machines being distributed through smaller, lesser-known companies, don't be surprised if you see a model appear on the shelf of your local store that's similar to one of the brands in the chart, but with an unfamiliar name.



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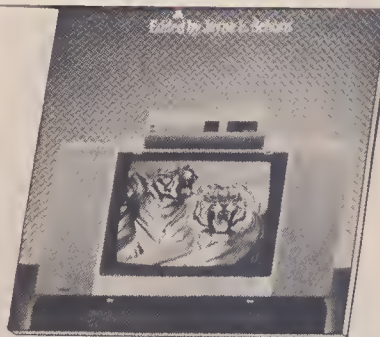
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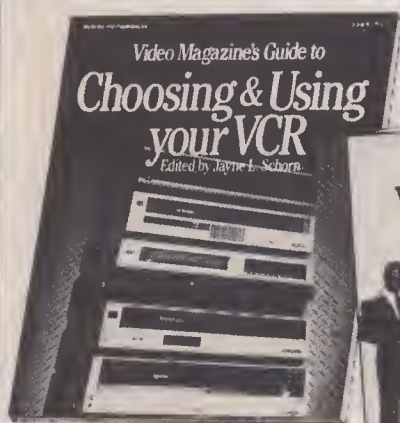
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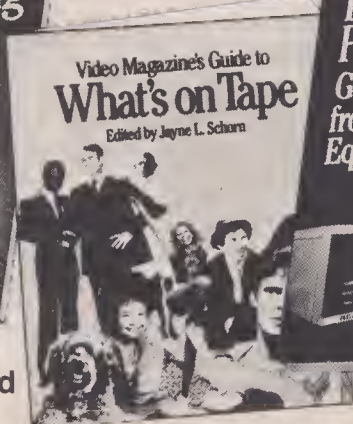
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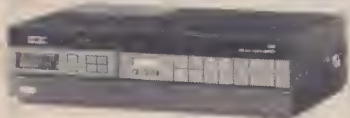


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Some dealers will readily admit who actually makes the machine (if you're interested) while with others you may have to sneak a peek at the back panel, where the "Made In..." label has to appear.

In the world of budget video, the brand name on the unit is less important than the price on the tag. 

**8mm Safari**

*continued from page 137*

ered it was a great backlit dust cloud being churned up by an endless single-file line of zebras and wildebeest.

Our driver told us there were probably a million animals trudging along. This was the vanguard of their annual 400-mile migration to Tanzania's Serengeti Plain. Suddenly we were enveloped by the cloud. Grit permeated everything. I had to get the migration on tape. But as I shot, I feared the dust would seep in through the cartridge-eject door and ruin the V8's delicate electronic innards. The moment we got back to our lodge, I started cleaning the camcorder. I ejected the tape, fearing the worst. Surprisingly, it was dust-free. The seal on the eject door fit almost airtight.

The Sony proved to be quite rugged as well. Our safari brochure forgot to mention that paved roads in Kenya are rarer than the most endangered species. Also, our land rovers and minibuses had long ago lost any semblance of suspension. During one sunrise in Tsavo we saw the carcass of a gigantic bull elephant lying on its side in thick Savannah grass. Hordes of vultures were on its back, fighting and feasting.

Our driver decided to move in for a closer look. *Clunk!* The land rover slammed into a boulder invisible in the tall grass. I went flying and so did the Sony. It was hurled against the ceiling and crashed to the floor; then it slid with a bang to the rear of the rover. Picking it up, I was surprised—it survived. The only damage was a nick on the lens housing and a few scratches on the body.

**Living with Limits**

However, notwithstanding its major strengths, the CCD-V8—like any groundbreaking product brought out for the first time—is not without some minor design and manufacturing flaws. While some of these might not be problems for the home user, my professional background, combined with the rigors of safari life, highlighted them.

First of all, any video camera is unforgiving in strong backlight—especially home-video cameras. This is because the automatic eye reads the strongest light source and stops down for it. Also, the resolution of most home-video cameras is very restricted. So if you're shooting a cheetah against a setting sun, there's a good chance the cheetah will silhouette, and you'll lose detail.

Like other cameras, the V8 attempts to

balance the exposure using a backlight-compensation switch. Hit it and the camera opens up over what the background reads, so you will get more detail of the foreground subject. The problem with this is the proper meter reading of the foreground subject can be as many as three stops lower than the sky. This, combined with low home-video resolution, makes the sky really "blow." I shot a family of elephants at sundown one afternoon with and without the backlight compensation. With compensation, the picture was milky and flat. Without compensation, the elephants were handsome silhouettes and the sky had beautiful detail.

Another feature that didn't work for me was Sony's frontlight switch. This, the manual explained, should be used when the foreground object is much brighter than the background. Nothing soaks up light like dark green trees and bushes. So I shot some baboons in bright sunlight against a dark forest background. I taped with and without the frontlight switch. But in screening the tape, I couldn't distinguish any significant difference.

When the Sony folks sent me the V8 to use for this evaluation, it arrived with two machine screws missing. These would have held the viewfinder bar to the body of the camcorder. I didn't have time to scrounge replacements before we left, so I wedged the viewfinder to the body with gaffer's tape—a filmmaker's best friend.

I would have shrugged this off as just one of those things—except it wasn't. On our safari I came across another Sony V8 in the hands of Walter Loewenstern Jr. of Santa Clara, California. Walter and his family were on a different itinerary, but we started out together and met a couple of times during our treks. The first time we reunited he said to me: "Remember those screws you said were missing? Well, mine came out, too. And the threads are stripped, so I can't get them back in."

A more serious problem for Walter and myself was the combination battery charger/AC power supply. It fits into the battery compartment on the camcorder when you want direct AC power. It also fits into a small transformer when you want to charge your nicad batteries.

Before we left for Kenya, I bought an extra battery and confirmed that the power in Africa is 220 volts AC. Since my charger was 110-120 I knew I'd need to step down the 220. So I armed myself with a huge 100-watt, 220-to-110 transformer plus a standard set of European plug adapters and a small appliance convertor as backup for the transformer.

I felt smug about my thoroughness, though the transformer alone ate up most of my baggage weight allowance. The first time I tried to charge my batteries, I was able to plug the big transformer into the lodge's wall outlet thanks to my adapters. But when I tried to plug the Sony charger into the transformer, I couldn't. Alas, I hadn't noticed the Sony had one fat triangle



prong, and it wouldn't fit in the transformer's standard opening.


I switched to Plan B, the small appliance convertor. It worked. When the "charge" light went on, I confidently strutted off to dinner. I hadn't planned on Murphy's Primary Law, though. When I returned, the Sony Charger had blown. I took it apart hoping to replace a fuse. But when I found it, Kenyon heard the word Mommy told him never to use. The blown fuse was soldered to the circuit board—and it was a very rare 1.25 amp. Where in the wilds of Kenya was I going to find a 1.25-amp fuse?

Fortunately, the battery had charged somewhat before the charger blew. Also, Linda reminded me we would run into Walter in a few days and I could borrow his charger. Well, you've probably guessed what happened. When we met, Walter rushed up to me hoping to use *mine*. His had blown too.

My biggest problem with the Sony was its "idiot lights." Like most video cameras, the V8 has lights within the viewfinder for Recording, White Balance, and Low Light Level. Outdoors I found it extremely difficult to see if the red Recording light was on. Several times I was recording without knowing it (which resulted in some very arty footage of my pants leg).

Asked if these problems had come up for other users, Sony spokesman Jay Sato responded that he has heard no complaints about faulty screws, blowing fuses, or the red Recording light. Of course the CCD-V8 is a rather new product, and we can expect refinements—such as less problematic adapters—to arrive.

One final point: the V8 may be easy to shoot, but it's not that handy for home playback. It can play through your TV if you're willing to go through the hassle of connecting it. The optional tuner cradle is convenient but costs a few hundred bucks. An easier solution is to transfer your 8mm footage to VHS or Beta for playback on your tabletop home VCR. Connections are quick and simple with standard dubbing cables, and loss in picture quality is minimal.

All of which is not to say I don't recommend the Sony CCD-V8—I do. The V8's picture and sound aren't just as good as half-inch, in my opinion—overall they're a *better* combo, SuperBeta notwithstanding. Zebras with brown stripes look brown. Zebras with black stripes look black. And take it from me, a hippo's snort sounds *terrifying*. So how about a deal on a half-inch camera? I won't need mine anymore—I'm buying a V8. 

## Trivia Q & A

continued from page 140

41. In *Terms of Endearment* Shirley MacLaine gets Jack Nicholson into her bedroom by inviting him to see a painting by what artist?

Renoir.

42. What actor fell victim to Jason's revenge while resting on a cot in *Friday the 13th*?

Kevin Bacon.

43. What was Dorothy's last name in *The Wizard of Oz*?

Gale.

44. What was the name of Kevin Kline's business in *The Big Chill*?

Running Dog Athletic Footwear Center.

45. What three films are advertised outside the *Thriller* theater?

'Schlock', 'House of Wax' and 'The Mad Magician.'

46. What was the name of the meat company advertised on the back of *Rocky's* boxing robe?

Shamrock Meats.

47. Behind what book does Dr. Frank Bryant hide his bottle in *Educating Rita*?

"Lost Weekend" by Jacobson.

48. What was the name originally given to *Dumbo* by his mother?

Jumbo Jr.



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49. At what nightclub does the reporter in *Citizen Kane* find Susan Alexander Kane working?

*El Rancho.*

50. Where is the Mods' Brighton beach hangout in *Quadrophenia*?

*Beach Cafe or The Ballroom.*

51. In *Blade Runner* what was Deckard called by his wife?

*Sushi or cold fish.*

52. According to *The Right Stuff*, what brand of gum does Chuck Yeager chew?

*Beaman's.*

53. What book does Wallace Shawn say he is reading in *My Dinner with Andre*?

*Charlton Heston's autobiography.*

54. On what airlines do Jill and Guy escape from Djakarta in *The Year of Living Dangerously*?

*Royal Netherlands.*

55. What company is interested in purchasing a Scottish town in *Local Hero*?

*Knox Oil & Gas.*

56. What brand and type of liquor does Wes drink in *Tightrope*?

*Pepe Lopez Tequila.*

57. Who plays Mr. Maps in the 9th chapter of *In Search of the Golden Horse Treasure*?

*Elisha Cook Jr.*

58. Out of what hotel's window is Paul Snider hung upside-down in *Star 80*?

*The Blue Horizon Hotel.*

59. At what depth did the rivets pop out of *Das Boot (The Boat)*?

*230 meters.*

60. At what address does Reva Cody write her brother in *Streets of Fire*?

*838 Hurley Street, Cliffside.*

61. How far did *The Bounty* get before ending its attempts to round the Horn, and how long did it take?

*85 miles in 31 days.*

62. What is the number of the pay phone Rupert Pupkin gives as his office number in *The King of Comedy*?

*JL 5-4321.*

63. For what time does Gordon Zellerby set his time bomb in *Village of the Damned*?

*8:30.*

64. What is the total of the three face-up index cards in *Max Maven's Mindgames*?

*12.*

65. What was the number of the override command in *Alien*?

*100375.*

66. What was Jane Fonda and Michael Sarrazin's marathon number in *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*

*67.*

67. What was George Berger's exact date of birth in *Hair*?

*October 11, 1945.*

68. Over the years, how many people were in the band *This Is Spinal Tap*?

*37.*

69. What symbols are on *The Seven Samurai*'s banner and how many of each?

*Six circles and one triangle (and a symbol).*

70. What is the number of the all-white metro subway car in *Beat Street*?

*8219.*

71. At what time do the Ekdahls always have Christmas dinner in *Fanny and Alexander*?

*4:30 p.m.*

72. What seat does John Lithgow occupy on *The Twilight Zone*'s airplane?

*Seat 4A.*

73. What was the license-plate number of Karen Silkwood's Honda?

*XA3124.*

74. What is the number on the uniform of the police sergeant who comes to fight Kevin Kline and *The Pirates of Penzance*?

*130.*

75. On what date did the 2001 computer HAL become operational?



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January 12, 1992.

**76.** How much is Japan worth when Largo and 007 play "Domination" in *Never Say Never Again*?

\$16,000 or £16,000.

**77.** What is L.B. Jeffries' phone number in *Rear Window*?

Chelsea 2-5598.

**78.** On what floor is the safe located in *Lassiter*?

The fourth.

**79.** If you wanted a date with Burt Reynolds, *The Man Who Loved Women*, where would you call and write him?

Phone: 654-1654. Address: 29715 Cuthbert.

**80.** On what issue of *Life* magazine did Roy Hobbs make the cover in *The Natural*?

August 14, 1939.

**81.** How many mice per acre did Tyler figure there were in *Never Cry Wolf*?

4,000 mice.

**82.** How many miles out into the Everglades is *Porky's*?

70 miles.

**83.** For how many years was Norman the Dresser for Sir?

16 years.

**84.** What did it take for Joan Wilder to enlist the aid of Jack Coulton in *Romancing the Stone*?

\$375 in *American Express Travelers Checks*.

**85.** What score did Elyse get on Eddie's test in *Diner*? What was passing?

Elyse got a 63, 65 was passing.

**86.** According to an interview with Ronnie Bennett Spector in *Girl Groups*, whose music did Phil Spector listen to at top volume?

Wagner.

**87.** What song is playing on the public-address system as Johnny and Tracey trash their school in *Reckless*?

"We're the kids in America."

**88.** Where were the Ramones to play in *Rock 'n' Roll High School*?

The Rockatorium.

**89.** What is playing on Dishonest John's TV in the "Grime Doesn't Pay" segment of *Beany and Cecil*, Vol. II?

'Sing Sing Along With Butch or Yesterday's News Today.'

**90.** What would you hear if you rang Mr. Alexander's doorbell in *A Clockwork Orange*?

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

**91.** What song does Ed Begley Jr. sing in *The Cat People*?

"The Lion Sleeps Tonight."

**92.** For what record company did Eddie and the Cruisers record?

Satin Records.

**93.** What movie was based on a story from

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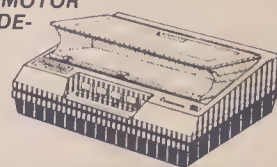
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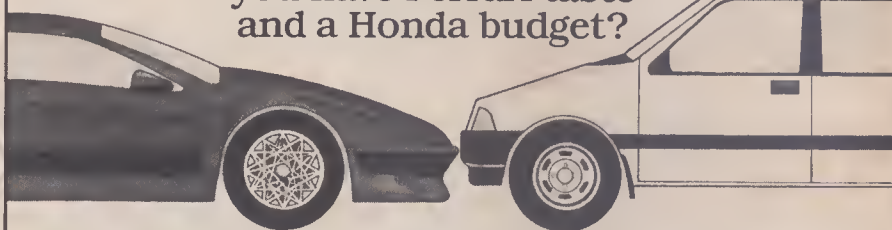
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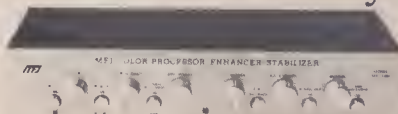
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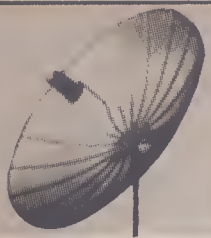
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the book *In God We Trust—All Others Pay Cash?*

'A Christmas Story.'

94. What character starred in all these fictional films? *Captain from Tortuga, Amarillo, Sounds of the Sudan, Rapture, Defender of the Crown?*

Peter O'Toole's Alan Swann in 'My Favorite Year.'

In what video movies will you hear these quotes?

95. "Trying a man for murder here is like giving out speeding tickets at the Indy 500."

'Apocalypse Now.'

96. "An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind."

'Gandhi.'

97. "Again we see there is nothing you can possess that I cannot take away. And you thought I'd given up."

'Raiders of the Lost Ark.'

98. "You know, even as a kid I always went for the wrong women. I think that's my problem. When my mother took me to see *Snow White* everyone fell in love with Snow White. I immediately fell for the wicked witch."

'Annie Hall.'

99. "Now the circle is complete. When I left you I was a learner. Now I am the master."

'Star Wars.'

100. "I think that we're all in our private traps. Clamped in them. And none of us can ever get out. We scratch and claw, but only at the air. Only at each other. And for all of it, we never budge an inch."

'Psycho.'

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## What's Opera Doc

continued from page 144

the emotional realism in it to make it plausible. This falls especially to Lucia and Enrico, characters whose conflicts must be clear for them to make any sense at all, as she ends up crazy and he responsible for forcing her to marry a man she does not love. In these two versions, the Lucias couldn't be more different—Anna Moffo is sweet, romantic, and tortured almost from the beginning by her love for her brother Enrico's enemy Edgardo; Joan Sutherland (whose first big success this was) seems more rational about her dilemma and more defiant in her early scenes. Both sing superbly, and if I prefer Moffo, it is mainly because she looks more like the 18-year-old girl Lucia is supposed to be. In the famous Mad Scene, however, I must give the nod to Sutherland, who is—well, *madder* after killing her bridegroom and going back to her wedding party in her bloody nightgown as if nothing happened.

For the rest of the cast, I prefer those on the tape, which has the advantage of being a movie shot on location and so not confined to the Metropolitan's slightly tawdry sets. Giulio Fioravanti (Enrico) and Lajos Kozma (Edgardo) are more fiery in the natural settings than Pablo Elvira and Alfredo Kraus are onstage. The LV disc of course has better sound and picture quality, but VAI's transfer of the film is much better than its television transfers—though still not stereo.

**Aida** (1871). Music: Giuseppe Verdi. Libretto in Italian: Antonio Ghislanzoni. Libretto enclosed. Arena di Verona, cond. Anton Guadango. Thorn EMI/HBO tape; Pioneer disc.

There is nothing quite like the immense opera productions done outdoors in Italy. Termini di Caracalla and Arena di Verona can hold as many people as can fill the Met or Covent Garden in a week—and do. In this production, spectacular as only a big production can be, everything is *molto espressivo*. Maria Chiara's Aida seems physically slight next to her rival Fiorenza Cossotta (Amneris), but her tone and phrasing bring out the complexities of her divided loyalties: to her country, to her lover, to her father. And Cossotta breathes real menace into her threats and ultimatums—these are women who would die rather than be separated from those they love. Their common love object—leader of the Egyptian armies that occupy Aida's native Ethiopia, Nicolo Martinucci's Radames—has a fine tenor and is convincing as the focus of so much *passione*. Also effective is Giuseppe Scandola's Amonasro (Aida's father and King of Ethiopia) whose persuasive singing dupes Radames into betraying his country.

I was able to compare the LV disc and tape. Tape's lower resolution tends to exacerbate the problem of showing the im-

mensity of the entire stage, when actors are no bigger than ants at the bottom of the screen. Both sound marvelous and the Beta Hi-Fi tape is at the top of its class. What isn't is the producer's attitude regarding subtitles. Librettos are for records, where there isn't anything more to look at, not visual splendors like this, where a look at the text is a look away from the action.

**Die Fledermaus** (1874). Music: Johann Strauss Jr. Libretto in German: Carl Haffner/Richard Genée, adapted by Gerhard Bronner. Libretto enclosed. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden, cond. Plácido Domingo. Thorn EMI/HBO.

*Die Fledermaus* has more disguises and

mistaken identities than a Rich Little special and a megaplot I couldn't recount in 10 pages. Let it suffice to say that this adaptation is funny (when you can look up from the libretto long enough to see the good low comedy and acting), and vocally superb, with the marvelous Kiri Te Kanawa as Rosalinde, the object of Eisenstein's (Hermann Prey), Alfredo's (Dennis O'Neill), and Falke's (Benjamin Luxon) collective passion. Each of the rivals (one of them Rosalinde's husband) sings buffoonishly (Prey), "dramatically" (O'Neill), or connivingly (Luxon) as suits his role. Luxon again stands out in a comic role, as does Prey, who is well-known for this role.

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the best video presentation of a live performance I have yet seen, particularly in its subtitling—not every word, just what's important and descriptions in italics of the general situation when a lot of fast, meaningless dialogue is going on. Kudos, too, for its failure to inflict endless curtain calls between acts. Would that they all lacked them.

**Der Rosenkavalier** (1911). Music: Richard Strauss. Libretto in German: Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Vienna Philharmonic, Salzburg Opera Chorus, cond. Herbert von Karajan. VAI.

This is the first post-Freudian opera and one of the very greatest. The story of an older woman's love for a younger man, the younger man's love for an affianced young noblewoman, and the buffoonish attempts of a country squire to close out his marriage contract while flirting with every female in sight, it is also one of the funniest. And one of the most touching, as the older woman, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's thrilling Marschallin, gives up her young man out of love and concern for his future happiness.

As the young Count Octavian, Sena Jurinac is a woman playing a man who disguises himself as a woman. Her fine mezzo-soprano brings off both Octavian's passion for the two women as well as the pretty "maid" Mariandel's flirtations with the country squire, Baron Ochs. As Baron Ochs, Otto Edelmann is a superb *buffo*—this is the opera's biggest role and requires a singer who can be vain, silly, obnoxious,

wounded, wheedling, and huge, often all at once, and he meets every challenge. Filmed in rich Technicolor from a 1962 production in Salzburg, this looks as shimmering as the VHS monaural soundtrack sounds on a good machine.

**The Rake's Progress** (1951). Music: Igor Stravinsky. Libretto in English: W.H. Auden/Chester Kallman. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, cond. Bernard Haitink. VAI.

Don't be frightened by this lovely Stravinsky opera—it is Handel/Hadyn updated by brief bits of Berg, accessible to anyone who can stand a classically sung line. As it is in English, the great wit of the Auden/Kallman libretto can be appreciated directly, as can its real drama. Based on Hogarth's series of etchings, it follows their spirit right down to the "moral" ending. It is beautifully designed by David Hockney, whose sets alternate between Hogarth-inspired stylization and modern eclecticism but distort slightly onscreen due to the low resolution of the videotape.

The singers are generally marvelous. The best is Samuel Ramey as Nick Shadlow, who wears Captain Hook attire and has a ham actor's dream in his terrifically evil role. He lives it up, being charming and creepy at the same time—no mean trick. The only disappointment is Leo Goeke as Rakewell, the central character. He has a nice enough voice but *no* personality whatsoever.

## What Next?

What's odd about what's available is the lack of staples: no *Tosca*, nor anything by Wagner, despite the recent PBS broadcasts of the complete *Ring of the Nibelungs*. There are only two operas in French, only two *verismo*, one *belcanto*, and only two of the movies made of operas in the last ten years.

Yet there are two versions of *Turandot*, of *Falstaff*, and of *Die Fledermaus*—all worthy works, but to have two of these when there is no *Pagliacci* or *Barber of Seville* seems like silly marketing strategy at best. Worse is passing over the superlative film versions of *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni*. Both were directed by filmmakers of the highest order and provide rich, personal interpretations of Mozart. They are important both as pure movies and opera productions, making their absence doubly felt.

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continued from page 180

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## Selected Videography—Opera *continued from page 144*

### Falstaff

Music: Giuseppe Verdi; Libretto (in Italian): Arrigo Boito. (a) Libretto enclosed. Color. 1983. Renato Bruson, Katia Ricciarelli. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond. 141 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO. (b) English subtitles. Color. 1976. Donald Gramm, Benjamin Luxon, Reni Penkova, Elizabeth Gale. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, London Philharmonic, John Pritchard, cond. Staging Jean-Pierre Ponnelle. TV dir. Dave Heather. 123 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$69.95. VAI.

### Fidelio

Music: Ludwig van Beethoven; Libretto (in German): Josef Sonnleithner. English subtitles. Color. 1979. Elisabeth Soderstrom, Anton de Ridder, Curt Appelgren, Elizabeth Gale. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, London Philharmonic, Bernard Haitink, cond. Staging Peter Hall. TV dir. Dave Heather. 130 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$69.95. VAI.

### Die Fledermaus

Music: Johann Straus Jr.; Libretto (in German): Carl Haffner/Richard Genée. (a) Libretto enclosed (adapted by Gerhard Bronner. Color. 1983. Kiri Te Kanawa, Hermann Prey, Hildegard Heichele, Benjamin Luxon. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Plácido Domingo, cond. Staging Leopold Lindtberg/Richard Gregson. TV dir. Humphrey Burton. 180 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$49.95 (2 cass.). Thorn EMI/HBO/

LV. \$49.95. Pioneer. (b) Sung in English. Color. 1982. Joan Sutherland, Monique Brynnel, Robert Gard, Heather Begg. The Australian Opera, Elizabethan Sydney Orchestra, Richard Bonyng, cond. Staging Anthony Besch. TV dir. Hugh Davidson. 142 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. Sony.

### Lucia di Lammermoor

Music: Gaetano Donizetti; Libretto (in Italian): Salvatore Cammarano. English subtitles (both). (a) Color. 1971. Anna Moffo, Lajos Kozma, Giulio Fioravanti, Paolo Washington. The Rome Symphony and RAI Chorus, Carlo Felice Cillario, cond. Dir. by Mario Lanfranchi. 108 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. VAI. (b) Color. 1984. Joan Sutherland, Alfredo Kraus, Pablo Elvira. Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus, Richard Bonyng, cond. 128 min. LV. \$49.95. Pioneer.

### Macbeth

Music: Giuseppe Verdi; Libretto (in Italian): Francesco Piave. English subtitles. Color. 1972. Kostas Paskalis, Josephine Barstow, James Morris. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, London Philharmonic, John Pritchard, cond. Staging Michael Hadjimischiv. TV dir. Dave Heather. 148 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. VAI.

### Madama Butterfly

Music: Giacomo Puccini; Libretto (in Italian): Luigi Illica/Giuseppe Giacosa. Libretto enclosed. Color. 1983. Raina Kabaivanska, Nazzareno Antinori. Arena di Verona Or-

chestra and Chorus. 150 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

### The Magic Flute

Music: W.A. Mozart; Libretto (in German): Emanuel Schikaneder. English subtitles. Color. 1978. Benjamin Luxon, Leo Goeke, Felicity Lott, May Sandoz, Thomas Thomaschke. The London Philharmonic, Glyndebourne Chorus. Bernard Haitink, cond. Staging John Cox. TV dir. Dave Heather. 164 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95 (2 cass.). VAI.

### Manon Lescaut

Music: Giacomo Puccini; Libretto (in Italian): Leoncavallo/Oliva/Praga, Giacosa/Illica/Ricordi. Libretto enclosed. Color. 1983. Kiri Te Kanawa, Plácido Domingo, Thomas Allen. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Giuseppe Sinopoli, cond. 129 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO. \$49.95. Pioneer.

### The Marriage of Figaro

Music: W.A. Mozart; Libretto (in Italian): Lorenzo DaPonte. English subtitles. Color. 1973. Ileana Cotrubas, Frederica Von Stade, Benjamin Luxon, Kiri Te Kanawa. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, London Philharmonic, John Pritchard, cond. Staging Peter Hall. TV dir. Dave Heather. 168 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95 (2 cass.). VAI.

### Mary Stuart (Maria Stuardi)

Music: Gaetano Donizetti; Libretto (in Italian). English subtitles. Color. 1982. Janet Baker. Film dir. by Peter Butler. 105 min.

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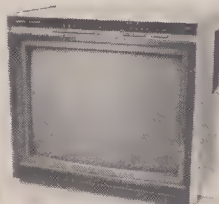
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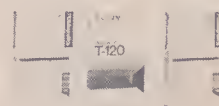
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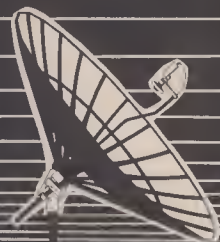
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### Otello

Music: Giuseppe Verdi; Libretto (in Italian): Arrigo Boito. Libretto enclosed. Color. 1982. Vladimir Atlantov, Kiri Te Kanawa. Arena di Verona Orchestra. 144 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO./LV. \$49.95. Pioneer.

### Peter Grimes

Music: Benjamin Britten; Libretto (in English): Montagu Slater. Color. 1981. Jon Vickers, Heather Harper, Norman Bailey. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Colin Davis, cond. Staging Elijah Moshinsky. 150 min. LV. \$59.95. Pioneer.

### The Rake's Progress

Music: Igor Stravinsky; Libretto (in English): W.H. Auden/Chester Kallman. Color. 1977. Samuel Ramey, Felicity Lott, Leo Goeke, Rosalind Elias. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, London Philharmonic, Bernard Haitink, cond. 146 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95 (2 cass.). VAI.

### The Return of Ulysses

Music: Claudio Monteverdi; Libretto (in Italian): Alessandro Striggio. English subtitles. Color. 1973. Janet Baker, Benjamin Luxon, Richard Lewis. Glyndebourne Festival Opera, London Philharmonic, Raymond Leppard, cond. Staging Peter Hall. TV dir. Dave Heather. 152 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$89.95 (2 cass.). VAI.

### Rigoletto

Music: Giuseppe Verdi; Libretto (in Italian): Francesco Piave. (a) Libretto enclosed. Color. 1983. Garbis Boyagian, Alida Ferrarini, Vincenzo Bello. Arena di Verona Orchestra. 115 min. Beta, VHS. \$74.95. MasterVision. (b) English dialogue. Color. 1954. Aldo Silvani, Gerard Landry, Janet Vidor. Condensed film version. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Reel Images.

### Der Rosenkavalier

Music: Richard Strauss; Libretto (in German): Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Color. 1961. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Sena Jurinac, Otto Edelman. Vienna Philharmonic, Salzburg Opera Chorus, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Dir. Paul Czinzer. 190 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95 (2 cass.). VAI.

### Samson et Delila

Music: Camille Saint-Saens; Libretto (in French): Ferdinand Lemaire. Libretto enclosed. Color. 1981. John Vickers, Shirley Verrett. The Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Colin Davis, cond. Staging Elijah Moshinsky. TV dir. John Vernon. 118 min. LV. \$59.95. Pioneer.

### La Traviata

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### Il Trovatore

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Salvatore Cammarano. English subtitles. Color. 1983. Joan Sutherland, Lauris Elms, Kenneth Collins, Jonathan Summers. Australian Opera, Elizabethan Sydney Orchestra, Richard Bonyng, cond. Staging Elijah Moshinsky. TV dir. Riccardo Pelizzieri. 138 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. Sony.

### Turandot

Music: Giacomo Puccini; Libretto (in Italian): Giuseppe Adami/Renato Simoni. (a) English subtitles. Color. 1983. Eva Marton, Katia Ricciarelli, Jose Carreras. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Lorin Maazel, cond. Staging Harold Prince. 138 min. Beta (Hi-Fi), VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. MGM/UA. (b) Libretto enclosed. Color. 1984. Ghena Dimitrova, Nicola Martinucci. Arena di Verona

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## Projection TVs

continued from page 149

seemed largely due to their smaller screen size. They were an average of 31 inches smaller. This meant that, other factors being equal, their resolution and brightness would naturally seem enhanced compared to the larger front projection models.

The Mitsubishi turned out to be my favorite in each category with the rear-lens unit claiming the winner's circle, though it ran even on my score card with the Sony rear projection model. The Sony showed a stronger black, and differences in resolution and convergence seemed barely discernible. Personal taste is essentially why I prefer the Mitsubishi. Its colors are cooler, less heated than the Sony, the reds less intense. I like that though I suspect many, if not most viewers, would lean toward Sony's emotionally warmer hues. The RCA exhibited a more even tonal range than the Sony. Its black was strong but the colors came across as relatively dull compared to the other two.

The choice was less difficult among the front-lens models. The Mitsubishi impressively outperformed the two Klosses and the Zenith, again thanks in part to a significantly smaller screen, a design choice that appears to have paid off. Its curved 50-inch screen held the image crisply to its borders and tonal values were well defined. By contrast, the Klosses seemed washed out. There seemed to be too much red and orange in the Model One and its colors looked a little dull. However, its whites were stronger than in the smaller Kloss

Model Two which also exhibited a surprising moire effect and colors that faded at the edges.

The Zenith, with a screen twice as large as the Mitsubishi, ran fourth if judged by color and resolution criteria. However, it has one advantage that would make me choose it over the Klosses: a 100-inch screen. This is just large enough to create the illusion that you're watching a feature film, albeit in a small, quadriplexed theater. The effect is psychological but compelling. Though I might hate to watch an eight-foot head of Dan Rather reading the news, I would certainly click on the Zenith for a tape of *Passage to India* or the Super Bowl. The Klosses, unfortunately, offered neither the bonus of super-size nor the brightness of the Mitsubishi.

If my living room were vast enough and my pockets deeper, I would find the best of these sets more than acceptable—as a second TV. They're better than their predecessors but the trade-off in brightness and resolution is still apparent, and probably inevitable. Moreover, the vertical lenticulation of the screen causes the colors to vary widely from one side of a viewing area to another. You have to be willing to overlook a fall-off in sharpness and color quality for the extra size. But these projection TVs, particularly the rear-lens models, demonstrate that big-screen hunters no longer have to settle for the barely watchable. Videophiles put off by the format's reputation should look again.

—Stan Pinkwas


If you're a regular reader of VideoTests you know that I have reservations about projection TV systems. Don't get me wrong. I like the big images projection systems give, but the scan lines detract from the overall picture. I frequently say that projection TV isn't ready yet. I have seen demonstrations of non-interlaced and double scanned projection TV, and it's great. I look forward to the day when High Defini-

tion TV systems can use screens that large. My beef is that until then projection TV magnifies the weaknesses as well as the strengths of the NTSC system.

Our first criteria was apparent brightness. This was one of the few times that I had the opportunity to do a head-to-head comparison under identical conditions. I expected to see a great difference in brightness. I was pleasantly surprised to find that the difference was not as noticeable as the numbers might lead you to believe. In front projection systems the Mitsubishi 526 seemed to have an edge over the Kloss Two followed by the Kloss Model One, then the Zenith. For the record, that is exactly the reverse order of the screen sizes. Among the rear projectors it was again close. The Sony 4110 seemed to have a small edge over the Mitsubishi with the RCA being the least bright. Note though that the picture on the RCA was warmer (more reddish), and that could be a psychological reaction.

On apparent contrast the order was the same among front projection systems: the Mitsubishi, Kloss Model Two, Kloss Model One, and the Zenith. The order was slightly changed for the rear projection models: the Mitsubishi seemed best, followed by the Sony and the RCA.

We didn't set the convergence on these sets ourselves, thanks to New York Video. All have user convergence controls except the Zenith. For front projectors, adjustments were easiest on the Kloss. The Model Two has a wired remote control panel that is easy to use. The Model One may have the same remote as an option or the same controls may be located in a compartment at the top of the projector. Next in ease was the Mitsubishi 526 and then the Zenith which has no user-accessible convergence controls (just jiggle the projector placement for the least fringing). Among the rear projectors, the Sony has its controls on the front and the Mitsubishi was the hardest with the controls on the back.



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All rear projection models are easier to adjust with two people. One turns the controls and another, at the viewing position, tells when the setting is correct.

When all of the sets were as good as we could get them, we compared the convergence at the corners with the convergence at the center. None had perfect convergence but some were a good deal better than others. The rear projectors all had less fringing than the front projectors, partly because of screen size. In front types the order was Kloss Model Two, Mitsubishi, Kloss Model One, and Zenith. Among the rear types the order was Sony, RCA, and Mitsubishi.

On resolution all appeared almost equal and passed all of the bars in a multiburst test signal. On pictures the order seemed to be Mitsubishi, Kloss Model One, Zenith, and Kloss Model Two. (The Model Two, which showed some color pollution on the closely spaced bars, was later diagnosed as having a color killer problem, so consider its performance in this test as

*If my living room was big enough and my pockets deeper, I would find the best of these sets more than acceptable.*

super—close to the Model One.) Among the rear projectors the order was RCA, Sony, and Mitsubishi.

On the staircase test for evenness in the reproduction of dark through light shades, the front systems showed the Model One ahead by a nose followed by the Zenith, Mitsubishi, and Model Two. The rear systems were led by the RCA, followed by the Sony and the Mitsubishi. Weaknesses showed as a merging of the two darkest bars.

On both color strength and tint range, the picture is at the mercy of the operator.

If you've ever viewed TV with a group of people, you know that getting agreement on these settings is next to impossible. I looked for each set's ability to deliver what the operator asked. On color strength there was enough range in all of the sets to please all of the group at some setting. When I rated the front projections on color saturation, the order came out to be Kloss Model Two, Zenith, Kloss Model One, and Mitsubishi. The rear projections were led by RCA, followed by Sony, and Mitsubishi. On tint range, the front projectors led with Zenith, then Mitsubishi, Model Two, and Model One. The rear projectors were led by Mitsubishi followed by Sony and RCA. Color evenness is important, too, because the set should introduce as little variation as possible. Here the order for the front projectors was Zenith, Model One, Model Two, and Mitsubishi. For the rear projectors it was RCA, Sony, and Mitsubishi.

The real test of color reproduction is a picture. Here, one difference was immediately apparent. The RCA and Zenith were

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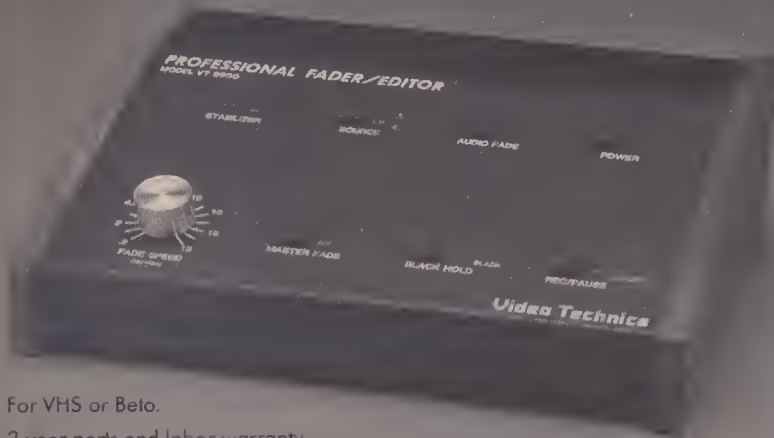
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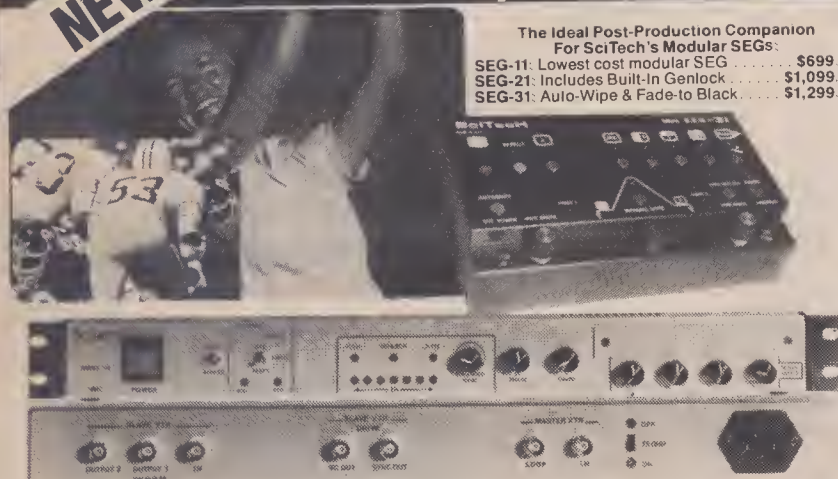
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set for a warmer color balance than the other sets tested. While all of the pictures were pleasing, those two wouldn't give as brilliant a blue in a sea or sky scene, if you adjusted the sets for pleasing flesh tones. Knowing that color preference is subjective, my preferences were for Model Two, Mitsubishi, Model One, and then the Zenith. The rear projectors were topped by Mitsubishi, then RCA, and Sony. Yet if you ignored the others and viewed them one at a time, the human eye would quickly adjust to accept the one you were watching as accurate. That is the weakness of subjective testing.

Choosing an overall best picture was difficult because none was best in every category. Among the the front projection systems it was the Mitsubishi by an edge, followed by the Kloss Model One, then Model Two, then the Zenith. But if I wanted to watch a football game I'd choose the Zenith for its screen size, followed by the Model One. Get the picture? Which is best depends on the application. Outdoor stuff with lots of sea and sky is where the Mitsubishi shines. The differences between the Model One and Two are small because they have virtually the same innards.

Among the rear projection systems the RCA is best at indoor scenes with warmer lighting. The Sony is best at flesh tones and vegetation, and the Mitsubishi is best at sea and sky scenes. How do you pick a "best" under those circumstances?

At this point no manufacturer seems to make the perfect projection system. However, there are a number of systems that do fairly well in providing a "big" picture with only a few compromises. If you've never seen a projection system, try to see one. You may find that you like a big picture. Remember the final choice is always subjective.

—Lancelot Braithwaite

Designing big-screen TVs must be tricky. First, our NTSC video system isn't designed to produce a big picture. Even the popular 25-inch phosphor tube pushes the system well past its originally intended limits. A watchable large-screen unit must magnify the NTSC image while disguising its flaws, of which low resolution (sharpness) is only one. The idea is to use vivid color and a juxtaposition of other factors to make you think you're seeing a better picture than is actually there. It's almost an exercise in optical illusions.

Getting down to cases, the latest VIDEO Magazine eyes-on tests produced two major findings for this observer: when in doubt, choose rear projection over front projection, and when in doubt, buy a Mitsubishi.

Three of the four front-projection units we examined were disappointing. This is all the more surprising given that two of them were made by Kloss, long a leader in big-screen TVs. Dodgy color and a lack of deep blacks—the latter a long standing problem with projection TVs—were the



factors that lowered the two Kloss and one Zenith units in my estimation. While the balance of strengths and weakness modulated slightly from test category to test category, my basic conclusions on chart and picture tests were reasonably close. Very good contrast, brightness, and all-around color characteristics distinguished the Mitsubishi from the pack, but in this case the picture tests were a little less impressive than the chart tests. None of the front-projection units viewed—even the Mitsubishi—would inspire me to part with a large portion of my bank account.

The rear-projection units were much more impressive as a group. All delivered adequate or better brightness and contrast—two areas that I once thought would wed me forever to the phosphor tube. Color characteristics varied from set to set, with the RCA sporting that company's traditional (and deliberate) favoring of reds, while the Sony looked kind of blue and the Mitsubishi only less so. As my color preferences tend toward a slight favoring of blue, the Mitsubishi would be my pick of the lot, though I could live with any of these sets.

What clinched the Mitsubishi rear-projection set for me was the color-bar test. Alone among all the contestants—front-projection as well as rear—the Mitsubishi threw a set of color bars on the screen with not one bar seriously impaired. At a quick glance it looked exactly like what I see when I put color bars on my 19-inch Proton monitor at home. A mediocre performance on color-bar tests doesn't necessarily indicate a mediocre picture—but as a rule when the color bars have been up to snuff, I've never seen a picture I didn't like.

—Mark Fleischmann

## Videoholics

*continued from page 154*

ice's corner of the Twilight Zone.

Insurance covers only their value as blank tapes. The collectible worth, being indeterminable, means nothing. Though shipping disappearances are almost as rare as copies of the first Super Bowl, a brush with a single postal blunder is traumatic enough to make your palms sweat every time you drop a package in the local box.

Mention the possibility of burglary and Volo shudders hard enough to knock my copies of *It Takes a Thief* off the shelf. "Losing my collection would devastate me. Most of it is irreplaceable. I have things nobody else has. That makes me proud." He lists as high spots the '76 Olympics, the JFK assassination and a surprise guest shot by Paul Lynde, doing the weather on a Toledo, Ohio newscast.

I discovered Volo as many of his trading contacts did—through his regular column in the revered, now defunct *Videophile* magazine. Periodically, Volo and fellow videophiles would sequester themselves in

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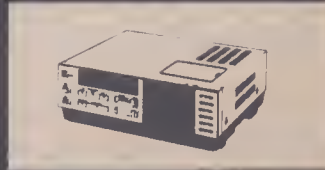
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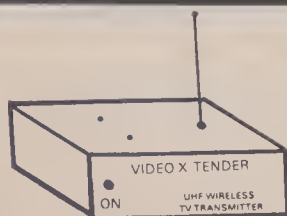
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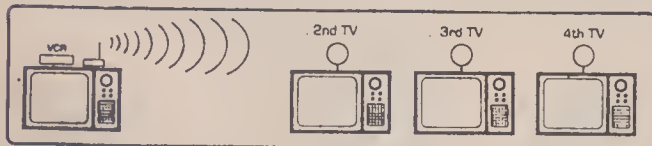
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a secluded spot for a wild weekend of video indulgence. "We'd dub and swap," he says. "It was tremendous fun."

For Michael Burgujian of Whitestone, New York, the dubbing and swapping is finished. The fun has just begun. I once tried to set up a trade with him. I failed. He just didn't want anything I had. That's understandable. Burgujian has approximately 6000 TV shows on tape. I simply got to him too late.

"I don't collect at all anymore," he says. "I've got pretty much everything I wanted, and I ran out of room. Now that I'm no longer trading, I have time to watch my tapes. Back then, I was too busy duplicating."

*"A guy from Kentucky sent a TV Guide and Green Hornet was on Sundays. I had him tape the whole series for me."*

In January '78 Burgujian purchased an early VHS machine and placed ads in *Videophile*. "I made contact with hundreds of people. We'd swap TV Guides. A guy from Kentucky sent one and lo and behold, *Green Hornet* was on Sunday mornings. It was the only station in the country running it. I had him do the whole series for me."

Why go to the effort and expense of amassing such a collection? "It's memories," says Burgujian. "I grew up in the '60s, so these are the shows I want to watch again. I don't like current TV at all. There are virtually no shows on the air now that are worth watching, let alone taping."

In the '60s, Ray Glasser of Cleveland, Ohio recognized the value of taping favorite programs. He put every episode of *Star Trek* on tape—audio tape, that is. In 1976, he rushed out to buy a Betamax.

"In the old days, no one had anything," says Glasser. "We were starving for programming. Nobody had cable. There were no video stores. Some people built up libraries just for trading purposes. Today those libraries don't mean anything. Movies are a dime a dozen. TV shows that used to be rare—*Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, *Lancer*, *Secret Agent*—are on cable or pre-recorded." When Glasser started, the financial drain of tapes alone seemed prohibitive. At \$17 a shot, Beta I tapes still only recorded an hour of programming.

Once early on, the expense made me think twice about my own compulsion. I gazed upon a stack of disorganized, unlabeled tapes that not even a modern database program could have put in order and said to myself, "Paul, my boy, you've gone so far off the deep end, you've lost sight of the diving board." Then the sound of the



rewind clicking off snapped me back to the reality of my obsession. I popped the latest addition to my collection out of the deck, tossed it onto the heap and never looked back.

The first time a machine of mine broke down—my only unit at the time—I went through withdrawal. I didn't miss the playback capability, just the recording. I couldn't stand the thought of missing something that might never be repeated. I have nearly 500 tapes now, containing thousands of intriguing snippets—trailers, celebrity commercials, historic news bulletins, talk show segments, title sequences from extinct TV series, magical musical numbers—but it's not enough. I'll never have enough.

Since the flow of desirable material is infinite, it's fortunate that many fanatics are able to supplement their incomes in video-related enterprises. Martin has co-authored a video movie guide. Davis operates a video store. Burgujian sells horror tapes by mail. Volo is an accomplished videographer. Glasser and his wife, a native of Japan, have set up a Japanese-language tape-rental club.

## Join the Club

There's no sexual, ethnic, or geographic discrimination. You don't have to be independently wealthy, though many collectors have to slash the grocery budget to buy their next case of blanks. Despite the elaborate setups of some aficionados, there are only three basic requirements: a video recorder, a few blanks and an overwhelming desire to be the program director of your own TV set.

If you feel you don't have anything tempting in your library and the TV stations you pick up don't run anything out-of-the-ordinary, don't worry. You can often swap two or three blanks for that trade item you fancy. If you want to join the club, you should aspire to the highest principles of trading. The Golden Rule is: Tape for others as you would have them tape for you.

When making a list of what you have to offer, grade your material strictly. Is it a crisp, clear, first-generation recording? Or is it a dub in which the program appears to have been shot through Lyle Alzado's sweatsocks? Is it uncut? If it's an old TV show, does it have the original commercials? Include as much information as possible. When it comes to completing your half of the bargain, don't dawdle.

Use good-quality blank tapes. If you have a preference in tape manufacturers, let your trading partner know. Make sure to package tapes properly before mailing. A well-planned trade almost always satisfies both parties.

Soon you'll be hosting video viewing parties. Your astounded guests will cry, "How in the world did you get that on tape?!" You'll just smile smugly, raise your eyebrows, and say, "Hey, I've got connections. Want to make a deal?"

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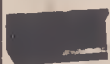
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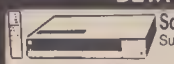
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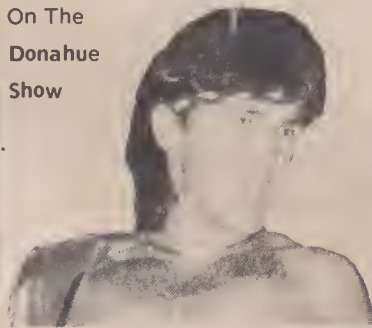
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# Off the Air

## The Last Word

### Low Power Catch-22

By Bob Brewin

**R**emember low-power TV? Conceived five years ago in the final months of Charles Ferris' reign as Federal Communications Commission chairman, LPTV came close to being the electronic version of the chicken-in-every-pot promise. Just pony up \$250,000 compared to the \$2 or \$3 million needed to start a full-power station, file a few simple papers with the FCC, and Everyman, almost anywhere, could become a TV mogul.

So many people bought the dream that the FCC was buried under more than 40,000 LPTV applications, which delayed implementation of this fantasy until the bureaucrats could devise a computer program to sift through the paper. Yup, some folks did get rich—the lawyers who heaped all the stuff on the FCC and the engineers who cranked out site surveys on a production-line basis.

Meanwhile reality set in. Low-power output (limited to 100 watts on VHF and 1000 watts on UHF) meant that thousands of new stations could be dropped into the spectrum without interfering with each other or existing outlets. But low-power also meant a limited range—15 to 25 miles under ideal conditions—and not many national advertisers are interested in making media buys on a station whose only service area is a place like Alpine, Texas or Billings, Montana.

Programming was a costly stumbling block too. Satellite-fed networks to serve LPTV stations started and folded with a speed and frequency even the cable industry would find embarrassing. The first LPTV station to go on the air, serving Bemidji, Minnesota, started with local programming schemes worthy of a big-city network affiliate. It quickly reverted to broadcasting pay-TV programming when ad revenues failed to meet the bills.

But late last year, Jeff Nightbyrd—head of Austin, Texas-based Low Power Technology—broke the LPTV jinx with Catch-22, his station in Anchorage, Alaska. In May 1985 Catch-22 became the first LPTV station in the country with an audience big enough to garner Nielsen ratings. The station's ratings generally more than hold their own in an area with three network affiliates, an independent Christian broadcaster, and a highly competitive cable system.

The first step toward operating a successful LPTV station is to call it anything but low power, says Nightbyrd, who operates another station in the university town of Lawrence, Kansas. "We call our stations 'metro television' because that's what they do—they put a signal into a metropolitan area that's the same strength as full-power broadcasters. Our viewers don't think of us as low-power TV. To them, we're the same as any of the other stations." Then, he said, the station must be built inexpensively (the Anchorage station cost \$500,000) but at the

same time deliver a quality picture with a big-station look. Nightbyrd did this by buying the best cartridge videotape format technology he could find and creating slick promos and on-the-air IDs.


Finally, programming has to be inexpensive to produce but must have excellent local appeal. To do this Nightbyrd opted for music-video programming crafted to the demographics and interests of the Anchorage area. Promotional flair helped in the start-up. Since Catch-22 was the first UHF outlet in Anchorage when it went on the air in October 1984, viewers had to be taught how to pick up the signal. To do this Catch-22 needed to get a lot of UHF loop antennas into the area—fast. Nightbyrd accomplished this through a tie-in promotional campaign with a local convenience-store chain and Coca-Cola, offering viewers a Coke and an antenna for 50 cents. "We sold 8000 antennas in three months," he says.

In April 1985 Catch-22 again caught viewers' attention by going stereo ahead of the other stations in the area. This brought in even more viewers. "Stereo and TV stores use our signal to demonstrate their new equipment," Nightbyrd says. The local cable system—which is not obligated under FCC rules to carry LPTV stations—picks up Catch-22 and the stereo audio too. With its blanket coverage of Anchorage, the station easily outdistances MTV (which Nightbyrd calls "tapioca TV").

The station involves itself heavily with viewers, inviting call-ins, sponsoring contests (one prize was a trip around

the world), and showcasing local bands in a segment called *Bombshelter Videos*—tapes so excruciatingly bad, they're good. Looking for the kind of character to differentiate the station from the white bread look of MTV, Nightbyrd hired the doyen of the local club scene, Lulu Small, as an on-the-air VJ. She showed up in red-and-black leopard-print Spandex pants. Catch-22 also made a headlong assault on what Nightbyrd considers his real competition—radio. The station touts itself as "FM radio for the eyes" and lives up to the billing by beating out every radio station in the city for listeners and viewers.

Catch-22's success in Anchorage also can be measured on the bottom line: Nightbyrd claims it's the first LPTV to make money, with operations going into the black less than nine months after sign-on. That's quite an achievement considering that the station's ad rates average \$25 for a 30-second spot, though most advertisers buy flights of commercials in \$1000 to \$5000 packages.

Nightbyrd has visions of building a national network of LPTV stations based on the Catch-22 model. He had licenses for stations in San Antonio (on a prized VHF slot, Channel 3); Lincoln, Nebraska; Topeka, Kansas; and Kansas City, Missouri. He also inspects and dickers for other properties from would-be LPTV licensees who have seen their dream begin to fade. But he knows it brightens when you change the name of the game from LPTV to MetroTV. 



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